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Workers of All Countries, Unite!



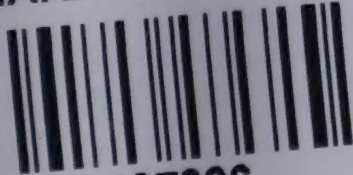
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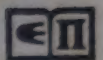
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The April Theses

AKSHARA GRANTHALAYA



ACC.NO. 107836



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The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution¹

I did not arrive in Petrograd until the night of April 3, and therefore at the meeting on April 4 I could, of course, deliver the report on the tasks of the revolutionary proletariat only on my own behalf, and with reservations as to insufficient preparation.

The only thing I could do to make things easier for myself—and for *honest* opponents—was to prepare the theses *in writing*. I read them out, and gave the text to Comrade Tsereteli. I read them *twice* very slowly: first at a meeting of Bolsheviks and then at a meeting of both Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.²

I publish these personal theses of mine with only the briefest explanatory notes, which were developed in far greater detail in the report.

Theses

1) In our attitude towards the war, which under the new government of Lvov and Co. unquestionably remains on Russia's part a predatory imperialist war owing to the capitalist nature of that government, not the slightest concession to "revolutionary defencism" is permissible.

The class-conscious proletariat can give its consent to a revolutionary war, which would really justify revolutionary defencism, only on condition: (a) that the power pass to the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasants aligned with the proletariat; (b) that all annexations be

renounced in deed and not in word; (c) that a complete break be effected in actual fact with all capitalist interests.

In view of the undoubted honesty of those broad sections of the mass believers in revolutionary defencism who accept the war only as a necessity, and not as a means of conquest, in view of the fact that they are being deceived by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary with particular thoroughness, persistence and patience to explain their error to them, to explain the inseparable connection existing between capital and the imperialist war, and to prove that without overthrowing capital *it is impossible* to end the war by a truly democratic peace, a peace not imposed by violence.

The most widespread campaign for this view must be organised in the army at the front.

Fraternisation.

2) The specific feature of the present situation in Russia is that the country is *passing* from the first stage of the revolution—which, owing to the insufficient class-consciousness and organisation of the proletariat, placed power in the hands of the bourgeoisie—to its *second* stage, which must place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasants.

This transition is characterised, on the one hand, by a maximum of legally recognised rights (Russia is *now* the freest of all the belligerent countries in the world); on the other, by the absence of violence towards the masses, and, finally, by their unreasoning trust in the government of capitalists, those worst enemies of peace and socialism.

This peculiar situation demands of us an ability to adapt ourselves to the *special* conditions of Party work among unprecedentedly large masses of proletarians who have just awakened to political life.

3) No support for the Provisional Government; the utter falsity of all its promises should be made clear, particularly of those relating to the renunciation of annexations. Exposure in place of the impermissible, illusion-breeding “demand” that *this* government, a government of capitalists, should *cease* to be an imperialist government.

4) Recognition of the fact that in most of the Soviets of Workers’ Deputies our Party is in a minority, so far a small minority, as against *a bloc of all* the petty-bourgeois opportunist elements, from the Popular Socialists and the Socialist-Revolutionaries down to the Organising Com-

mittee³ (Chkhaidze, Tsereteli, etc.), Steklov, etc., etc., who have yielded to the influence of the bourgeoisie and spread that influence among the proletariat.

The masses must be made to see that the Soviets of Workers' Deputies are the *only possible* form of revolutionary government, and that therefore our task is, as long as *this* government yields to the influence of the bourgeoisie, to present a patient, systematic and persistent *explanation* of the errors of their tactics, an explanation especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses.

As long as we are in the minority we carry on the work of criticising and exposing errors and at the same time we preach the necessity of transferring the entire state power to the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, so that the people may overcome their mistakes by experience.

5) Not a parliamentary republic—to return to a parliamentary republic from the Soviets of Workers' Deputies would be a retrograde step—but a republic of Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the country, from top to bottom.

Abolition of the police, the army and the bureaucracy.*

The salaries of all officials, all of whom are elective and displaceable at any time, not to exceed the average wage of a competent worker.

6) The weight of emphasis in the agrarian programme to be shifted to the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies.

Confiscation of all landed estates.

Nationalisation of *all* lands in the country, the land to be disposed of by the local Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies. The organisation of separate Soviets of Deputies of Poor Peasants. The setting up of a model farm on each of the large estates (ranging in size from 100 to 300 dessiatines, according to local and other conditions, and to the decisions of the local bodies) under the control of the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies and for the public account.

7) The immediate amalgamation of all banks in the country into a single national bank, and the institution of control over it by the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

* I. e., the standing army to be replaced by the arming of the whole people.

8) It is not our *immediate* task to "introduce" socialism, but only to bring social production and the distribution of products at once under the *control* of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies

9) Party tasks:

- a) Immediate convocation of a Party congress;
- b) Alteration of the Party Programme, mainly:
 - (1) On the question of imperialism and the imperialist war;
 - (2) On our attitude towards the state and *our* demand for a "commune state"*;
 - (3) Amendment of our out-of-date minimum programme.
- c) Change of the Party's name.**

10) A new International.

We must take the initiative in creating a revolutionary International, an International against the *social-chauvinists* and against the "Centre".***

In order that the reader may understand why I had especially to emphasise as a rare exception the "case" of honest opponents, I invite him to compare the above theses with the following objection by Mr. Goldenberg: Lenin, he said, "has planted the banner of civil war in the midst of revolutionary democracy" (quoted in No. 5 of Mr. Plekhanov's *Yedinstvo*⁴).

Isn't it a gem?

I write, announce and elaborately explain: "In view of the undoubted honesty of those *broad* sections of the *mass* believers in revolutionary defencism . . . in view of the fact that they are being deceived by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary with *particular* thoroughness, persistence and *patience* to explain their error to them. . .".

* I.e., a state of which the Paris Commune was the prototype.

** Instead of "Social-Democracy", whose official leaders *throughout* the world have betrayed socialism and deserted to the bourgeoisie (the "defencists" and the vacillating "Kautskyites"), we must call ourselves the *Communist Party*.

*** The "Centre" in the international Social-Democratic movement is the trend which vacillates between the chauvinists (= "defencists") and internationalists, i.e., Kautsky and Co. in Germany, Longuet and Co. in France, Chkheidze and Co. in Russia, Turati and Co. in Italy, MacDonald and Co. in Britain, etc.

Yet the bourgeois gentlemen who call themselves Social-Democrats, who *do not* belong either to the *broad* sections or to the *mass* believers in defencism, with serene brow present my views thus: "The banner (!)* of civil war" (of which there is not a word in the theses and not a word in my speech!) has been planted (!) "in the midst (!!) of revolutionary democracy...".

What does this mean? In what way does this differ from riot-inciting agitation, from *Russkaya Volya*⁵?

I write, announce and elaborately explain: "The Soviets of Workers' Deputies are the *only possible* form of revolutionary government, and therefore our task is to present a patient, systematic, and persistent *explanation* of the errors of their tactics, an explanation especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses."

Yet opponents of a certain brand present my views as a call to "civil war in the midst of revolutionary democracy"!

I attacked the Provisional Government for *not* having appointed an early date, or any date at all, for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and for confining itself to promises. I argued that *without* the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies the convocation of the Constituent Assembly is not guaranteed and its success is impossible.

And the view is attributed to me that I am opposed to the speedy convocation of the Constituent Assembly!

I would call this "raving", had not decades of political struggle taught me to regard honesty in opponents as a rare exception.

Mr. Plekhanov in his paper called my speech "raving". Very good, Mr. Plekhanov! But look how awkward, uncouth, and slow-witted you are in your polemics. If I delivered a raving speech for two hours, how is it that an audience of hundreds tolerated this "raving"? Further, why does your paper devote a whole column to an account of the "raving"? Inconsistent, highly inconsistent!

It is, of course, much easier to shout, abuse, and howl than to attempt to relate, to explain, to recall *what* Marx and Engels said in 1871, 1872 and 1875 about the experience

* Interpolations in square brackets (within passages quoted by Lenin) have been introduced by Lenin, unless otherwise indicated.—Ed.

of the Paris Commune⁶ and about the *kind* of state the proletariat needs.

Ex-Marxist Mr. Plekhanov evidently does not care to recall Marxism.

I quoted the words of Rosa Luxemburg, who on August 4, 1914,⁷ called *German* Social-Democracy a “stinking corpse”. And the Plekhanovs, Goldenbergs and Co. feel “offended”. On whose behalf? On behalf of the *German* chauvinists, because they were called chauvinists!

They have got themselves in a mess, these poor Russian social-chauvinists—socialists in word and chauvinists in deed.

Written April 4 and 5 (17
and 18), 1917

Published April 7, 1917
in *Pravda* No. 26
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 19-26

Letters on Tactics⁸

Foreword

On April 4, 1917, I had occasion to make a report on the subject indicated in the title, first, at a meeting of Bolsheviks in Petrograd. These were delegates to the All-Russia Conference of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, who had to leave for their homes and therefore could not allow me to postpone it. After the meeting, the chairman, Comrade G. Zinoviev, asked me on behalf of the whole assembly to repeat my report immediately at a joint meeting of Bolshevik and Menshevik delegates, who wished to discuss the question of unifying the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

Difficult though it was for me immediately to repeat my report, I felt that I had no right to refuse once this was demanded of me by *my comrades-in-ideas* as well as by the Mensheviks, who, because of their impending departure, really could not grant me a delay.

In making my report, I read the theses which were published in No. 26 of *Pravda*,⁹ on April 7, 1917.*

Both the theses and my report gave rise to differences of opinion among the Bolsheviks themselves and the editors of *Pravda*. After a number of consultations, we unanimously concluded that it would be advisable *openly* to discuss our differences, and thus provide material for the All-Russia Conference of our Party (the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, united under the Central Committee) which is to meet in Petrograd on April 20, 1917.

* I reprint these theses together with the brief comment from the same issue of *Pravda* as an appendix to this letter. (See pp. 7-12 of this book.—Ed.)

Complying with this decision concerning a discussion, I am publishing the following *letters* in which I do not claim to have made an *exhaustive* study of the question, but wish merely to outline the principal arguments, which are especially essential for the *practical* tasks of the working-class movement.

First Letter

Assessment of the Present Situation

Marxism requires of us a strictly exact and objectively verifiable analysis of the relations of classes and of the concrete features peculiar to each historical situation. We Bolsheviks have always tried to meet this requirement, which is absolutely essential for giving a scientific foundation to policy.

"Our theory is not a dogma, but a guide to action,"¹⁰ Marx and Engels always said, rightly ridiculing the mere memorising and repetition of "formulas", that at best are capable only of marking out *general* tasks, which are necessarily modifiable by the *concrete* economic and political conditions of each particular *period* of the historical process.

What, then, are the clearly established objective *facts* which the party of the revolutionary proletariat must now be guided by in defining the tasks and forms of its activity?

Both in my first *Letter from Afar* ("The First Stage of the First Revolution") published in *Pravda* Nos. 14 and 15, March 21 and 22, 1917, and in my theses, I define "the specific feature of the present situation in Russia" as a period of *transition* from the first stage of the revolution to the second. I therefore considered the basic slogan, the "task of the day" at *this* moment to be: "Workers, you have performed miracles of proletarian heroism, the heroism of the people, in the civil war against tsarism. You must perform miracles of organisation, organisation of the proletariat and of the whole people, to prepare the way for your victory in the second stage of the revolution" (*Pravda* No. 15).*

What, then, is the first stage?

It is the passing of state power to the bourgeoisie.

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, pp. 306-07.—*Ed.*

Before the February-March revolution of 1917, state power in Russia was in the hands of one old class, namely, the feudal landed nobility, headed by Nicholas Romanov.

After the revolution, the power is in the hands of a *different* class, a new class, namely, the *bourgeoisie*.

The passing of state power from one *class* to another is the first, the principal, the basic sign of a *revolution*, both in the strictly scientific and in the practical political meaning of that term.

To this extent, the bourgeois, or the bourgeois-democratic, revolution in Russia is *completed*.

But at this point we hear a clamour of protest from people who readily call themselves "old Bolsheviks". Didn't we always maintain, they say, that the bourgeois-democratic revolution is completed only by the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry"? Is the agrarian revolution, which is also a bourgeois-democratic revolution, completed? Is it not a fact, on the contrary, that it has *not even* started?

My answer is: The Bolshevik slogans and ideas *on the whole* have been confirmed by history; but *concretely* things have worked out *differently*; they are more original, more peculiar, more variegated than anyone could have expected.

To ignore or overlook this fact would mean taking after those "old Bolsheviks" who more than once already have played so regrettable a role in the history of our Party by reiterating formulas senselessly *learned by rote* instead of *studying* the specific features of the new and living reality.

"The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" has *already* become a reality* in the Russian revolution, for this "formula" envisages only a *relation of classes*, and not a *concrete political institution implementing* this relation, this co-operation. "The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies"—there you have the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" already accomplished in reality.

This formula is already antiquated. Events have moved it from the realm of formulas into the realm of reality, clothed it with flesh and bone, concretised it and *thereby* modified it.

* In a certain form and to a certain extent.

A new and different task now faces us: to effect a split *within* this dictatorship between the proletarian elements (the anti-defencist, internationalist, "Communist" elements, who stand for a transition to the commune) and the *small-proprietor* or *petty-bourgeois* elements (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the other revolutionary defencists, who are opposed to moving towards the commune and are in favour of "supporting" the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois government).

The person who *now* speaks only of a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" is behind the times, consequently, he has in effect *gone over* to the petty bourgeoisie against the proletarian class struggle; that person should be consigned to the archive of "Bolshevik" pre-revolutionary antiques (it may be called the archive of "old Bolsheviks").

The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has already been realised, but in a highly original manner, and with a number of extremely important modifications. I shall deal with them separately in one of my next letters. For the present, it is essential to grasp the incontestable truth that a Marxist must take cognisance of real life, of the true facts of *reality*, and not cling to a theory of yesterday, which, like all theories, at best only outlines the main and the general, only *comes near* to embracing life in all its complexity.

"Theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life."¹¹

To deal with the question of "completion" of the bourgeois revolution *in the old way* is to sacrifice living Marxism to the dead letter.

According to the old way of thinking, the rule of the bourgeoisie could and should be *followed* by the rule of the proletariat and the peasantry, by their dictatorship.

In real life, however, things have *already* turned out *differently*; there has been an extremely original, novel and unprecedented *interlacing of the one with the other*. We have side by side, existing together, simultaneously, *both* the rule of the bourgeoisie (the government of Lvov and Guchkov) and a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, which is *voluntarily* ceding power to the bourgeoisie, voluntarily making itself an appendage of the bourgeoisie.

For it must not be forgotten that actually, in Petrograd, the power is in the hands of the workers and soldiers; the new government is *not* using and cannot use violence against them, because *there is no* police, *no* army standing apart from the people, *no* officialdom standing all-powerful *above* the people. This is a fact, the kind of fact that is characteristic of a state of the Paris Commune type. This fact does not fit into the old schemes. One must know how to adapt schemes to facts, instead of reiterating the now meaningless words about a "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" *in general*.

To throw more light on this question let us approach it from another angle.

A Marxist must not abandon the ground of careful analysis of class relations. The bourgeoisie is in power. But is not the mass of the peasants *also* a bourgeoisie, only of a different social stratum, of a different kind, of a different character? Whence does it follow that *this* stratum *cannot* come to power, thus "completing" the bourgeois-democratic revolution? Why should this be impossible?

This is how the old Bolsheviks often argue.

My reply is that it is quite possible. But, in assessing a given situation, a Marxist must proceed *not* from what is possible, but from what is real.

And the reality reveals the *fact* that freely elected soldiers' and peasants' deputies are freely joining the second, parallel government, and are freely supplementing, developing and completing it. And, just as freely, they are *surrendering* power to the bourgeoisie—a fact which does not in the least "contravene" the theory of Marxism, for we have always known and repeatedly pointed out that the bourgeoisie maintains itself in power *not* only by force but also by virtue of the lack of class-consciousness and organisation, the routinism and downtrodden state of the masses.

In view of this present-day reality, it is simply ridiculous to turn one's back on the fact and talk about "possibilities".

Possibly the peasantry may seize all the land and all the power. Far from forgetting this possibility, far from confining myself to the present, I definitely and clearly formulate the agrarian programme, taking into account the *new* phenomenon, i.e., the deeper cleavage between the agricultural labourers and the poor peasants on the one hand, and the peasant proprietors on the other.

But there is also another possibility; it is possible that the peasants will take the advice of the petty-bourgeois party of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, which has yielded to the influence of the bourgeoisie, has adopted a defencist stand, and which advises waiting for the Constituent Assembly, although not even the date of its convocation has yet been fixed.*

It is possible that the peasants will *maintain* and prolong their deal with the bourgeoisie, a deal which they have now concluded through the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies not only in form, but in fact.

Many things are possible. It would be a great mistake to forget the agrarian movement and the agrarian programme. But it would be no less a mistake to forget the *reality*, which reveals the *fact* that an *agreement*, or—to use a more exact, less legal, but more class-economic term—*class collaboration* exists between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry.

When this fact ceases to be a fact, when the peasantry separates from the bourgeoisie, seizes the land and power despite the bourgeoisie, that will be a new stage in the bourgeois-democratic revolution; and that matter will be dealt with separately.

A Marxist who, in view of the possibility of such a future stage, were to forget his duties in *the present*, when the peasantry is *in agreement* with the bourgeoisie, would turn petty bourgeois. For he would in practice be preaching to the proletariat *confidence* in the petty bourgeoisie ("this petty bourgeoisie, this peasantry, must separate from the bourgeoisie while the bourgeois-democratic revolution is still on"). Because of the "possibility" of so pleasing and sweet a future, in which the peasantry would *not* be the tail of the bourgeoisie, in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Chkheidzes, Tseretelis, and Steklovs would *not* be an appendage of the bourgeois government—because of the "possibility" of so pleasing a future, he would be forgetting *the unpleasant present*, in which the peasantry still forms

* Lest my words be misinterpreted, I shall say at once that I am positively in favour of the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers and Peasants *immediately* taking over *all* the land; but they should *themselves* observe the strictest order and discipline, not permit the slightest damage to machines, structures, or livestock, and in no case disorganise agriculture and grain production, but rather *develop* them, for the soldiers need *twice* as much bread, and the people must not be allowed to starve.

the tail of the bourgeoisie, and in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats have not yet given up their role as an appendage of the bourgeois government, as "His Majesty" Lvov's Opposition.¹²

This hypothetical person would resemble a sweetish Louis Blanc, or a sugary Kautskyite, but certainly not a revolutionary Marxist.

But are we not in danger of falling into subjectivism, of wanting to arrive at the socialist revolution by "skipping" the bourgeois-democratic revolution—which is not yet completed and has not yet exhausted the peasant movement?

I might be incurring this danger if I said: "No Tsar, but a *workers'* government."¹³ But I did *not* say that, I said something else. I said that there *can be no* government (barring a bourgeois government) in Russia *other than* that of the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. I said that power in Russia now can pass from Guchkov and Lvov *only* to these Soviets. And in these Soviets, as it happens, it is the peasants, the soldiers, i.e., petty bourgeoisie, who preponderate, to use a scientific, Marxist term, a class characterisation, and not a common, man-in-the-street, professional characterisation.

In my theses, I absolutely ensured myself against skipping over the peasant movement, which has not outlived itself, or the petty-bourgeois movement in general, against any *playing* at "seizure of power" by a workers' government, against any kind of Blanquist adventurism; for I pointedly referred to the experience of the Paris Commune. And this experience, as we know, and as Marx proved at length in 1871 and Engels in 1891,¹⁴ absolutely excludes Blanquism,¹⁵ absolutely ensures the direct, immediate and unquestionable rule of the *majority* and the activity of the masses only to the extent that the majority itself acts *consciously*.

In the theses, I very definitely reduced the question to one of *a struggle for influence within* the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Deputies. To leave no shadow of doubt on this score, I *twice* emphasised in the theses the need for patient and persistent "explanatory" work "adapted to the *practical* needs of the *masses*".

Ignorant persons or renegades from Marxism, like Mr. Plekhanov, may shout about anarchism, Blanquism, and so forth. But those who want to think and learn cannot fail to

understand that Blanquism means the seizure of power by a minority, whereas the Soviets are *admittedly* the direct and immediate organisation of the *majority* of the people. Work confined to a struggle for influence *within* these Soviets cannot, simply *cannot*, stray into the swamp of Blanquism. Nor can it stray into the swamp of anarchism, for anarchism denies *the need for a state and state power* in the period of *transition* from the rule of the bourgeoisie to the rule of the proletariat, whereas I, with a precision that precludes any possibility of misinterpretation, *advocate* the need for a state in this period, although, in accordance with Marx and the lessons of the Paris Commune, I advocate not the usual parliamentary bourgeois state, but a state *without* a standing army, *without* a police opposed to the people, *without* an officialdom placed above the people.

When Mr. Plekhanov, in his newspaper *Yedinstvo*, shouts with all his might that this is anarchism, he is merely giving further proof of his break with Marxism. Challenged by me in *Pravda* (No. 26) to tell us what Marx and Engels taught on the subject in 1871, 1872 and 1875,* Mr. Plekhanov can only preserve silence on the question at issue and shout out abuse after the manner of the enraged bourgeoisie.

Mr. Plekhanov, the ex-Marxist, has *absolutely* failed to understand the Marxist doctrine of the state. Incidentally, the germs of this lack of understanding are also to be found in his German pamphlet on anarchism.¹⁶

* * *

Now let us see how Comrade Y. Kamenev, in *Pravda* No. 27, formulates his "disagreements" with my theses and with the views expressed above. This will help us to grasp them more clearly.

"As for Comrade Lenin's general scheme," writes Comrade Kamenev, "it appears to us unacceptable, inasmuch as it proceeds from the assumption that the bourgeois-democratic revolution is *completed*, and builds on the immediate transformation of this revolution into a socialist revolution."

There are two big mistakes here.

First. The question of "completion" of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is *stated* wrongly. The question is put

* See pp. 11-12 of this book.—Ed.

in an abstract, simple, so to speak one-colour, way, which does *not* correspond to the objective reality. To put the question *this way*, to ask *now* "whether the bourgeois-democratic revolution is completed" and say *no more*, is to prevent oneself from seeing the exceedingly complex reality, which is at least "two-coloured". This is in theory. In practice, it means surrendering helplessly to *petty-bourgeois revolutionism*.

Indeed, reality shows us *both* the passing of power into the hands of the bourgeoisie (a "completed" bourgeois-democratic revolution of the usual type) and, side by side with the real government, the existence of a parallel government which represents the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry". This "second government" has *itself* ceded the power to the bourgeoisie, has chained *itself* to the bourgeois government.

Is this reality covered by Comrade Kamenev's old-Bolshevik formula, which says that "the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed"?

It is not. The formula is obsolete. It is no good at all. It is dead. And it is no use trying to revive it.

Second. A practical question. Who knows whether it is still possible at present for a *special* "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry", *detached* from the bourgeois government, to emerge in Russia? Marxist tactics cannot be based on the unknown.

But *if* this is still possible, then there is one, and only one, way towards it, namely, an immediate, resolute, and irrevocable separation of the proletarian Communist elements from the petty-bourgeois elements.

Why?

Because the entire petty bourgeoisie has, not by chance but of necessity, turned towards chauvinism (=defencism), towards "support" of the bourgeoisie, towards dependence on it, towards the *fear* of having to do without it, etc., etc.

How can the petty bourgeoisie be "pushed" into power, if even now it can take the power, but *does not want to*?

This can be done only by separating the proletarian, the Communist, party, by waging a proletarian class struggle *free from* the timidity of those petty bourgeois. Only the consolidation of the proletarians who are free from the influence of the petty bourgeoisie in deed and not only in

word can make the ground so hot under the feet of the petty bourgeoisie that it will be *obliged* under certain circumstances to take the power; it is even within the bounds of possibility that Guchkov and Milyukov—again under certain circumstances—will be for giving full and sole power to Chkheidze, Tsereteli, the S.R.s, and Steklov, since, after all, these are “defencists”.

To separate the proletarian elements of the Soviets (i.e., the proletarian, Communist, party) from the petty-bourgeois elements right now, immediately and irrevocably, is to give correct expression to the interests of the movement in *either* of two possible events: in the event that Russia will yet experience a special “dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry” independent of the bourgeoisie, and in the event that the petty bourgeoisie will not be able to tear itself away from the bourgeoisie and will oscillate eternally (that is, until socialism is established) between us and it.

To be guided in one’s activities merely by the simple formula, “the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed”, is like taking it upon oneself to guarantee that the petty bourgeoisie is definitely capable of being independent of the bourgeoisie. To do so is to throw oneself at the given moment on the mercy of the petty bourgeoisie.

Incidentally, in connection with the “formula” of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, it is worth mentioning that, in *Two Tactics* (July 1905), I made a point of emphasising (*Twelve Years*, p. 435¹⁷) this:

“Like everything else in the world, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has a past and a future. Its past is autocracy, serfdom, monarchy, and privilege. . . . Its future is the struggle against private property, the struggle of the wage-worker against the employer, the struggle for socialism. . . .”*

Comrade Kamenev’s mistake is that even in 1917 he sees only *the past* of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. As a matter of fact its *future* has already begun, for the interests and policies of the wage-worker and the petty proprietor have *actually* diverged already, even in such an important question as that of “defencism”, that of the attitude towards the imperialist war.

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, pp. 84-85.—Ed.

This brings me to the second mistake in Comrade Kamenev's argument quoted above. He criticises me, saying that my scheme "builds" on "the immediate transformation of this [bourgeois-democratic] revolution into a socialist revolution".

This is incorrect. I not only do not "build" on the "immediate transformation" of our revolution into a *socialist* one, but I actually warn against it, when in Thesis No. 8, I state: "It is *not* our *immediate* task to 'introduce' socialism. . . ."*

Is it not clear that no person who builds on the immediate transformation of our revolution into a socialist revolution could be opposed to the immediate task of introducing socialism?

Moreover, even a "commune state" (i.e., a state organised along the lines of the Paris Commune) *cannot* be introduced in Russia "immediately", because to do that it would be necessary for the *majority* of the deputies in all (or in most) Soviets to clearly recognise all the erroneousess and harm of the tactics and policy pursued by the S.R.s, Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov, etc. As for me, I declared unmistakably that in this respect I "build" only on "patient" explaining (does one have to be patient to bring about a change which can be effected "immediately"?).

Comrade Kamenev has somewhat overreached himself in his eagerness, and has repeated the bourgeois prejudice about the Paris Commune having wanted to introduce socialism "immediately". This is not so. The Commune, unfortunately, was too slow in introducing socialism. The real essence of the Commune is not where the bourgeois usually looks for it, but in the creation of a *state* of a special type. Such a state has *already* arisen in Russia, it is the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies!

Comrade Kamenev has not pondered on the *fact*, the significance of the *existing* Soviets, their identity, in point of type and socio-political character, with the commune state, and instead of studying the *fact*, he began to talk about something I was supposed to be "building" on for the "immediate" future. The result is, unfortunately, a repetition of the method used by many bourgeois: from the question as to *what are* the Soviets, whether they are of a *higher* type than a parliamentary republic, whether they are *more useful*

* See p. 10 of this book.—Ed.

for the people, *more democratic, more convenient* for the struggle, for combating, for instance, the grain shortage, etc.—from this real, urgent, vital issue, attention is diverted to the empty, would-be scientific, but actually hollow, professorially dead question of “building on an immediate transformation”.

An idle question falsely presented. I “build” *only* on this, *exclusively* on this—that the workers, soldiers and peasants will deal better than the officials, better than the police, with the difficult *practical* problems of producing more grain, distributing it better and keeping the soldiers better supplied, etc., etc.

I am deeply convinced that the Soviets will make the independent activity of the *masses* a reality more quickly and effectively than will a parliamentary republic (I shall compare the two types of state in greater detail in another letter). They will more effectively, more practically and more correctly decide what *steps* can be taken towards socialism and how these steps should be taken. Control over a bank, the merging of all banks into one, is *not yet* socialism, but it is *a step towards* socialism. Today such steps are being taken in Germany by the Junkers and the bourgeoisie against the people. Tomorrow the Soviet will be able to take these steps more effectively for the benefit of the people if the whole state power is in its hands.

What *compels* such steps?

Famine. Economic disorganisation. Imminent collapse. The horrors of war. The horrors of the wounds inflicted on mankind by the war.

Comrade Kamenev concludes his article with the remark that “in a broad discussion he hopes to carry his point of view, which is the only possible one for revolutionary Social-Democracy if it wishes to and should remain to the very end the party of the revolutionary masses of the proletariat and not turn into a group of Communist propagandists”.

It seems to me that these words betray a completely erroneous estimate of the situation. Comrade Kamenev contraposes to a “party of the masses” a “group of propagandists”. But the “masses” have now succumbed to the craze of “revolutionary” defencism. Is it not more becoming for internationalists at this moment to show that they can resist “mass” intoxication rather than to “wish to remain”

with the masses, i.e., to succumb to the general epidemic? Have we not seen how in all the belligerent countries of Europe the chauvinists tried to justify themselves on the grounds that they wished to "remain with the masses"? Must we not be able to remain for a time in the minority against the "mass" intoxication? Is it not the work of the propagandists at the present moment that forms the key point for *disentangling* the proletarian line from the defencist and petty-bourgeois "mass" intoxication? It was this fusion of the masses, proletarian and non-proletarian, regardless of class differences within the masses, that formed one of the conditions for the defencist epidemic. To speak contemptuously of a "group of propagandists" advocating a *proletarian* line does not seem to be very becoming.

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The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution

Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party

The moment of history through which Russia is now passing is marked by the following main characteristics:

The Class Character of the Revolution That Has Taken Place

1. The old tsarist power, which represented only a handful of feudalist landowners who commanded the entire state machinery (the army, the police, and the bureaucracy), has been overthrown and removed, but not completely destroyed. The monarchy has not been formally abolished; the Romanov gang continues to hatch monarchist intrigues. The vast landed possessions of the feudalist squirearchy have not been abolished.

2. State power in Russia has passed into the hands of a new *class*, namely, the bourgeoisie and landowners who had become bourgeois. *To this extent* the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia is completed.

Having come to power, the bourgeoisie has formed a bloc (an alliance) with the overt monarchists, who are notorious for their exceptionally ardent support of Nicholas the Bloody and Stolypin the Hangman in 1906-14 (Guchkov and other politicians to the right of the Cadets¹⁸). The new bourgeois government of Lvov and Co. has attempted and has begun to negotiate with the Romanovs for the restoration of the monarchy in Russia. Behind a screen of revolutionary phrases, this government is appointing partisans of the old regime to key positions. It is striving to reform the whole machinery of state (the army, the police, and the bureaucracy) as little as possible, and has turned it over to the bourgeoisie. The new government has already begun to hinder in every way the revolutionary initiative of mass action and the seizure of power by the people *from below*, which is the *sole* guarantee of the real success of the revolution.

Up to now this government has not even fixed a date for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. It is not laying a finger on the landed estates, which form the material foundation of feudal tsarism. This government does not even contemplate starting an investigation into, and making public, the activities of the monopolist financial organisations, the big banks, the syndicates and cartels of the capitalists, etc., or instituting control over them.

The key positions, the decisive ministerial posts in the new government (the Ministry of the Interior and the War Ministry, i.e., the command over the army, the police, the bureaucracy—the entire apparatus for oppressing the people) are held by outright monarchists and supporters of the system of big landed estates. The Cadets, those day-old republicans, republicans against their own will, have been assigned minor posts, having no direct relation to the *command* over the people or to the apparatus of state power. A. Kerensky, a Trudovik¹⁹ and “would-be socialist”, has no function whatsoever, except to lull the vigilance and attention of the people with sonorous phrases.

For all these reasons, the new bourgeois government does not deserve the confidence of the proletariat even in the sphere of internal policy, and no support of this government by the proletariat is admissible.

The Foreign Policy of the New Government

3. In the field of foreign policy, which has now been brought to the forefront by objective circumstances, the new government is a government for the continuation of the imperialist war, a war that is being waged in alliance with the imperialist powers—Britain, France, and others—for division of the capitalist spoils and for subjugating small and weak nations.

Subordinated to the interests of Russian capitalism and its powerful protector and master—Anglo-French imperialist capitalism, the wealthiest in the world, the new government, notwithstanding the wishes expressed in no uncertain fashion on behalf of the obvious majority of the peoples of Russia through the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, has taken no real steps to put an end to the slaughter of peoples for the interests of the capitalists. It has not even

published the secret treaties of an obviously predatory character (for the partition of Persia, the plunder of China, the plunder of Turkey, the partition of Austria, the annexation of Eastern Prussia, the annexation of the German colonies, etc.), which, as everybody knows, bind Russia to Anglo-French predatory imperialist capital. It has *confirmed* these treaties concluded by tsarism, which for centuries robbed and oppressed more nations than other tyrants and despots, and which not only oppressed, but also disgraced and demoralised the Great-Russian nation by making it an executioner of other nations.

The new government has confirmed these shameful depredatory treaties and has not proposed an immediate armistice to all the belligerent nations, in spite of the clearly expressed demand of the majority of the peoples of Russia, voiced through the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. It has evaded the issue with the help of solemn, sonorous, bombastic, but absolutely empty declarations and phrases, which, in the mouths of bourgeois diplomats, have always served, and still serve, to deceive the trustful and naïve masses of the oppressed people.

4. Not only, therefore, is the new government unworthy of the slightest confidence in the field of foreign policy, but to go on demanding that it should proclaim the will of the peoples of Russia for peace, that it should renounce annexations, and so on and so forth, is in practice merely to deceive the people, to inspire them with false hopes and to retard the clarification of their minds. It is indirectly to reconcile them to the continuation of a war the true social character of which is determined not by pious wishes, but by the class character of the government that wages the war, by the connection between the class represented by this government and the imperialist finance capital of Russia, Britain, France, etc., *by the real and actual policy* which that class is pursuing.

The Peculiar Nature of the Dual Power and Its Class Significance

5. The main feature of our revolution, a feature that most imperatively demands thoughtful consideration, is the *dual power* which arose in the very first days after the triumph of the revolution.

This dual power is evident in the existence of *two* governments: one is the main, the real, the actual government of the bourgeoisie, the "Provisional Government" of Lvov and Co., which holds in its hands all the organs of power; the other is a supplementary and parallel government, a "controlling" government in the shape of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which holds no organs of state power, but directly rests on the support of an obvious and indisputable majority of the people, on the armed workers and soldiers.

The class origin and the class significance of this dual power is the following: the Russian revolution of March 1917 not only swept away the whole tsarist monarchy, not only transferred the entire power to the bourgeoisie, but also *moved close towards* a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. The Petrograd and the other, the local, Soviets constitute precisely such a dictatorship (that is, a power resting not on the law but directly on the force of armed masses of the population), a dictatorship precisely of the above-mentioned classes.

6. The second highly important feature of the Russian revolution is the fact that the Petrograd Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, which, as everything goes to show, enjoys the confidence of most of the local Soviets, is *voluntarily* transferring state power to the bourgeoisie and its Provisional Government, is voluntarily *ceding* supremacy to the latter, having entered into an agreement to support it, and is limiting its own role to that of an observer, a supervisor of the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (the date for which has not even been announced as yet by the Provisional Government).

This remarkable feature, unparalleled in history in such a form, has led to the *interlocking of two* dictatorships: the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (for the government of Lvov and Co. is a dictatorship, i.e., a power based not on the law, not on the previously expressed will of the people, but on seizure by force, accomplished by a definite class, namely, the bourgeoisie) and the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry (the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies).

There is not the slightest doubt that such an "interlocking" *cannot* last long. Two powers *cannot exist* in a state. One of them is bound to pass away; and the entire Russian bourgeoisie is already trying its hardest everywhere and in

every way to keep out and weaken the Soviets, to reduce them to nought, and to establish the undivided power of the bourgeoisie.

The dual power merely expresses a *transitional* phase in the revolution's development, when it has gone farther than the ordinary bourgeois-democratic revolution, *but has not yet reached* a "pure" dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The class significance (and the class explanation) of this transitional and unstable situation is this: like all revolutions, our revolution required the greatest heroism and self-sacrifice on the part of the people for the struggle against tsarism; it also immediately *drew* unprecedentedly vast numbers of ordinary citizens *into the movement*.

From the point of view of science and practical politics, one of the chief symptoms of *every* real revolution is the unusually rapid, sudden, and abrupt increase in the number of "ordinary citizens" who begin to participate actively, independently and effectively in political life and in the *organisation of the state*.

Such is the case in Russia. Russia at present is seething. Millions and tens of millions of people, who had been politically dormant for ten years and politically crushed by the terrible oppression of tsarism and by inhuman toil for the landowners and capitalists, *have awakened and taken eagerly* to politics. And who are these millions and tens of millions? For the most part small proprietors, petty bourgeois, people standing midway between the capitalists and the wage-workers. Russia is the most petty-bourgeois of all European countries.

A gigantic petty-bourgeois wave has swept over everything and overwhelmed the class-conscious proletariat, not only by force of numbers but also ideologically; that is, it has infected and imbued very wide circles of workers with the petty-bourgeois political outlook.

The petty bourgeoisie are in real life dependent upon the bourgeoisie, for they live like masters and not like proletarians (from the point of view of their *place* in social *production*) and follow the bourgeoisie in their outlook.

An attitude of unreasoning trust in the capitalists—the worst foes of peace and socialism—characterises the politics of the *popular masses* in Russia at the present moment; this

is the fruit that has *grown* with revolutionary rapidity on the social and economic soil of the most petty-bourgeois of all European countries. This is the *class* basis for the “*agreement*” between the Provisional Government and the Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies (I emphasise that I am referring not so much to the formal agreement as to *actual* support, a tacit agreement, the surrender of power inspired by unreasoning trust), an agreement which has given the Guchkovs a fat piece—real power—and the Soviet merely promises and honours (for the time being), flattery, phrases, assurances, and the bowings and scrapings of the Kerenskys.

On the other side we have the inadequate numerical strength of the proletariat in Russia and its insufficient class-consciousness and organisation.

All the Narodnik parties,²⁰ including the Socialist-Revolutionaries, have always been petty-bourgeois. This is also true of the party of the Organising Committee (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, etc.). The non-party revolutionaries (Steklov and others) have similarly yielded to the tide, or have not been able to stand up to it, have not had the time to do it.

The Peculiar Nature of the Tactics Which Follow from the Above

7. For the Marxist, who must reckon with objective facts, with the masses and classes, and not with individuals and so on, the peculiar nature of the actual situation as described above must determine the peculiar nature of the tactics for the *present* moment.

This peculiarity of the situation calls, in the first place, for the “pouring of vinegar and bile into the sweet water of revolutionary-democratic phraseology” (as my fellow-member on the Central Committee of our Party, Teodorovich, so aptly put it at yesterday’s session of the All-Russia Congress of Railwaymen in Petrograd). Our work must be one of criticism, of *explaining* the mistakes of the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionary and Social-Democratic parties, of preparing and welding the elements of a *consciously* proletarian, Communist Party, and of *curing* the proletariat of the “general” petty-bourgeois intoxication.

This *seems* to be “nothing more” than propaganda work, but in reality it is most *practical revolutionary* work; for there is no advancing a revolution that has come to a standstill, that has choked itself with phrases, and that keeps “marking time”, *not because* of external obstacles, *not because of the violence* of the bourgeoisie (Guchkov is still only threatening to employ violence against the soldier mass), but *because* of the unreasoning trust of the people.

Only by overcoming this unreasoning trust (and we can and should overcome it only ideologically, by comradely persuasion, by pointing to the *lessons of experience*) can we set ourselves free from the prevailing *orgy of revolutionary phrase-mongering* and really stimulate the consciousness both of the proletariat and of the mass in general, as well as their bold and determined initiative *in the localities*—the independent realisation, development and consolidation of liberties, democracy, and the principle of people’s ownership of all the land.

8. The world-wide experience of bourgeois and landowner governments has evolved *two* methods of keeping the people in subjection. The first is violence. Nicholas Romanov I, nicknamed Nicholas of the Big Stick, and Nicholas II, the Bloody, demonstrated to the Russian people the maximum of what can and cannot be done in the way of these hangmen’s practices. But there is another method, best developed by the British and French bourgeoisie, who “learned their lesson” in a series of great revolutions and revolutionary movements of the masses. It is the method of deception, flattery, fine phrases, promises by the million, petty sops, and concessions of the unessential while retaining the essential.

The peculiar feature of the present situation in Russia is the transition at a dizzy speed from the first method to the second, from violent oppression of the people to *flattering* and deceiving the people by promises. Vaska the Cat listens, but goes on eating.²¹ Milyukov and Guchkov are holding power, they are protecting the profits of the capitalists, conducting an imperialist war in the interests of Russian and Anglo-French capital, and trying to get away with promises, declamation and bombastic statements in reply to the speeches of “cooks” like Chkhcheidze, Tsereteli and Steklov, who threaten, exhort, conjure, beseech, demand and proclaim. . . . Vaska the Cat listens, but goes on eating.

But from day to day trustful lack of reasoning and un-reasoning trust will be falling away, especially among the proletarians and *poor* peasants, who are being taught by experience (by their social and economic position) to distrust the capitalists.

The leaders of the petty bourgeoisie "must" teach the people to trust the bourgeoisie. The proletarians must teach the people to distrust the bourgeoisie.

Revolutionary Defencism and Its Class Significance

9. *Revolutionary defencism* must be regarded as the most important, the most striking manifestation of the petty-bourgeois wave that has swept over "nearly everything". It is the worst enemy of the further progress and success of the Russian revolution.

Those who have yielded on this point and have been unable to extricate themselves are lost to the revolution. But the masses yield in a different way from the leaders, and they extricate themselves *differently*, by a different course of development, by different means.

Revolutionary defencism is, on the one hand, a result of the deception of the masses by the bourgeoisie, a result of the trustful lack of reasoning on the part of the peasants and a section of the workers; it is, on the other, an expression of the interests and point of view of the small proprietor, who is to some extent interested in annexations and bank profits, and who "sacredly" guards the traditions of tsarism, which demoralised the Great Russians by making them do a hangman's work against the other peoples.

The bourgeoisie deceives the people by working on their noble pride in the revolution and by pretending that the *social and political* character of the war, as far as Russia is concerned, underwent a change because of this stage of the revolution, because of the substitution of the near-republic of Guchkov and Milyukov for the tsarist monarchy. And the people believed it—for a time—largely owing to age-old prejudices, which made them look upon the other peoples of Russia, i.e., the non-Great Russians, as something in the nature of a property and private estate of the Great Russians. This vile demoralisation of the Great-Russian people

by tsarism which taught them to regard the other peoples as something inferior, something belonging "by right" to Great Russia, could not disappear *instantly*.

What is required of us is the *ability* to explain to the masses that the social and political character of the war is determined not by the "good will" of individuals or groups, or even of nations, but by the position of the *class* which conducts the war, by the class *policy* of which the war is a continuation, by the *ties* of capital, which is the dominant economic force in modern society, by the *imperialist character* of international capital, by Russia's dependence in finance, banking and diplomacy upon Britain, France, and so on. To explain this skilfully in a way the people would understand is *not easy*; none of us would be able to do it at once without committing errors.

But this, and only this, must be the aim or, rather, the message of our propaganda. The slightest concession to revolutionary defencism is a *betrayal of socialism*, a complete renunciation of *internationalism*, no matter by what fine phrases and "practical" considerations it may be justified.

The slogan "Down with the War!" is, of course, correct. But it fails to take into account the specific nature of the tasks of the present moment and the necessity of *approaching* the broad mass of the people in a *different way*. It reminds me of the slogan "Down with the Tsar!" with which the inexperienced agitator of the "good old days" went simply and directly to the countryside—and got a beating for his pains. The mass believers in revolutionary defencism are *honest*, not in the personal, but in the class sense, i.e., they belong to *classes* (workers and the peasant poor) which *in actual fact* have nothing to gain from annexations and the subjugation of other peoples. This is nothing like the bourgeois and the "intellectual" fraternity, who know very well that you *cannot* renounce annexations without renouncing the rule of capital, and who unscrupulously deceive the people with fine phrases, with unlimited promises and endless assurances.

The rank-and-file believer in defencism regards the matter in the simple way of the man in the street: "I don't want annexations, but the Germans are 'going for' *me*, therefore I'm defending a just cause and not any kind of imperialist interests at all." To a man like this it must be explained again and again that it is not a question of his personal

wishes, but of mass, *class*, political relations and conditions, of the connection between the war and the interests of capital and the international network of banks, and so forth. Only such a struggle against defencism will be serious and will promise success—perhaps not a very rapid success, but one that will be real and enduring.

How Can the War Be Ended?

10. The war cannot be ended “at will”. It cannot be ended by the decision of one of the belligerents. It cannot be ended by “sticking your bayonet into the ground”, as one soldier, a defencist, expressed it.

The war cannot be ended by an “agreement” among the socialists of the various countries, by the “action” of the proletarians of all countries, by the “will” of the peoples, and so forth. All the phrases of this kind, which fill the articles of the defencist, semi-defencist, and semi-internationalist papers as well as innumerable resolutions, appeals, manifestos, and the resolutions of the Soviet of Soldiers’ and Workers’ Deputies—all such phrases are nothing but idle, innocent and pious wishes of the petty bourgeois. There is nothing more harmful than phrases like “ascertaining the will of the peoples for peace”, like the *sequence* of revolutionary actions of the proletariat (after the Russian proletariat comes the turn of the German), etc. All this is Blancism, fond dreams, a playing at “political campaigning”, and in reality just a repetition of the fable of Vaska the Cat.

The war is not a product of the evil will of rapacious capitalists, although it is undoubtedly being fought *only* in their interests and they alone are being enriched by it. The war is a product of half a century of development of world capitalism and of its billions of threads and connections. It is *impossible* to slip out of the imperialist war and achieve a democratic, non-coercive peace without overthrowing the power of capital and transferring state power to *another* class, the proletariat.

The Russian revolution of February-March 1917 was the beginning of the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war. This revolution took the *first* step towards ending the war; but it requires a *second* step, namely, the transfer of state power to the proletariat, to make the end of the war

a *certainty*. This will be the beginning of a "break-through" on a world-wide scale, a break-through in the front of capitalist interests; and only by breaking through *this* front *can* the proletariat save mankind from the horrors of war and endow it with the blessings of peace.

It is directly to such a "break-through" in the front of capitalism that the Russian revolution has *already* brought the Russian proletariat by creating the Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

A New Type of State Emerging from Our Revolution

11. The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and other Deputies are not understood, not only in the sense that their class significance, their role in the *Russian* revolution, is not clear to the majority. They are not understood also in the sense that they constitute a new form or rather a new *type of state*.

The most perfect, the most advanced type of bourgeois state is the *parliamentary democratic republic*: power is vested in parliament; the state machine, the apparatus and organ of administration, is of the customary kind: the standing army, the police, and the bureaucracy—which in practice is undisplaceable, is privileged and stands *above* the people.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, however, revolutionary epochs have advanced a *higher* type of democratic state, a state which in certain respects, as Engels put it, ceases to be a state, is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word".²² This is a state of the Paris Commune type, one in which a standing army and police divorced from the people are *replaced* by the direct arming of the people themselves. It is *this feature* that constitutes the very essence of the Commune, which has been so misrepresented and slandered by the bourgeois writers, and to which has been erroneously ascribed, among other things, the intention of immediately "introducing" socialism.

This is the type of state which the Russian revolution *began* to create in 1905 and in 1917. A Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and other Deputies, united in an All-Russia Constituent Assembly of people's represen-

tatives or in a Council of Soviets, etc., is what is *already being realised* in our country now, at this juncture. It is being realised by the initiative of the nation's millions, who are creating a democracy on their own, *in their own way*, without waiting until the Cadet professors draft their legislative bills for a parliamentary bourgeois republic, or until the pedants and routine-worshippers of petty-bourgeois "Social-Democracy", like Mr. Plekhanov or Kautsky, stop distorting the Marxist teaching on the state.

Marxism differs from anarchism in that it recognises the *need* for a state and for state power in the period of revolution in general, and in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism in particular.

Marxism differs from the petty-bourgeois, opportunist "Social-Democratism" of Plekhanov, Kautsky and Co. in that it recognises that what is required during these two periods is *not* a state of the usual parliamentary bourgeois republican type, but a state of the Paris Commune type.

The main distinctions between a state of the latter type and the old state are as follows.

It is quite easy (as history proves) to revert from a parliamentary bourgeois republic to a monarchy, for all the machinery of oppression—the army, the police, and the bureaucracy—is left intact. The Commune and the Soviets *smash* that machinery and do away with it.

The parliamentary bourgeois republic hampers and stifles the independent political life of the *masses*, their direct participation in the *democratic* organisation of the life of the state from the bottom up. The opposite is the case with the Soviets.

The latter reproduce the type of state which was being evolved by the Paris Commune and which Marx described as "the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour".²³

We are usually told that the Russian people are not yet prepared for the "introduction" of the Commune. This was the argument of the serf-owners when they claimed that the peasants were not prepared for emancipation. The Commune, i.e., the Soviets, does not "introduce", does not intend to "introduce", and must not introduce *any* reforms which have not absolutely matured both in economic reality and in the minds of the overwhelming majority of the people. The deeper the economic collapse and the crisis produced by

the war, the more urgent becomes the need for the most perfect political form, which will *facilitate* the healing of the terrible wounds inflicted on mankind by the war. The less the organisational experience of the Russian people, the more resolutely must we *proceed* to organisational development by the *people themselves*, and not merely by the bourgeois politicians and "well-placed" bureaucrats.

The sooner we shed the old prejudices of pseudo-Marxism, a Marxism falsified by Plekhanov, Kautsky and Co., the more actively we set about helping the people to organise Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies everywhere and immediately, and helping the latter to take life *in its entirety* under their control, and the longer Lvov and Co. delay the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the easier will it be for the people (through the medium of the Constituent Assembly, or independently of it, if Lvov delays its convocation too long) to cast their decision in favour of a republic of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. Errors in the new work of organisational development by the people themselves are at first inevitable; but it is better to make mistakes and go forward than to *wait* until the professors of law summoned by Mr. Lvov draft their laws for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, for the perpetuation of the parliamentary bourgeois republic and for the strangling of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies.

If we organise ourselves and conduct our propaganda skilfully, not only the proletarians, but nine-tenths of the peasants will be opposed to the restoration of the police, will be opposed to an undisplaceable and privileged bureaucracy and to an army divorced from the people. And that is all the new type of state stands for.

12. The substitution of a people's militia for the police is a reform that follows from the entire course of the revolution and that is now being introduced in most parts of Russia. We must explain to the people that in most of the bourgeois revolutions of the usual type, this reform was always extremely short-lived, and that the bourgeoisie—even the most democratic and republican—restored the police of the old, tsarist type, a police divorced from the people, commanded by the bourgeoisie and capable of oppressing the people in every way.

There is only one way to *prevent* the restoration of the police, and that is to create a people's militia and to fuse

it with the army (the standing army to be replaced by the arming of the entire people). Service in this militia should extend to all citizens of both sexes between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five without exception, if these tentatively suggested age limits may be taken as indicating the participation of adolescents and old people. Capitalists must pay their workers, servants, etc., for days devoted to public service in the militia. Unless women are brought to take an independent part not only in political life generally, but also in daily and universal public service, it is no use talking about full and stable democracy, let alone socialism. And such "police" functions as care of the sick and of homeless children, food inspection, etc., will never be satisfactorily discharged until women are on an equal footing with men, not merely nominally but in reality.

The tasks which the proletariat must put before the people in order to safeguard, consolidate and develop the revolution are prevention of the restoration of the police and enlistment of the organisational forces of the entire people in forming a people's militia.

The Agrarian and National Programmes

13. At the present moment we cannot say for certain whether a mighty agrarian revolution will develop in the Russian countryside in the near future. We cannot say exactly how profound the class cleavage is among the peasants, which has undoubtedly grown more profound of late as a division into agricultural labourers, wage-workers and poor peasants ("semi-proletarians"), on the one hand, and wealthy and middle peasants (capitalists and petty capitalists), on the other. Such questions will be, and can be, decided only by experience.

Being the party of the proletariat, however, we are unquestionably in duty bound not only immediately to advance an agrarian (land) programme but also to advocate practical measures which can be immediately realised *in the interests* of the peasant agrarian revolution in Russia.

We must demand the nationalisation of *all* the land, i.e., that all the land in the state should become the property of the central state power. This power must fix the size, etc., of the resettlement land fund, pass legislation for the con-

servation of forests, for land improvement, etc., and absolutely prohibit any middlemen to interpose themselves between the owner of the land, i.e., the state, and the tenant, i.e., the tiller (prohibit all subletting of land). However, the *disposal* of the land, the determination of the *local regulations* governing ownership and tenure of land, must in no case be placed in the hands of bureaucrats and officials, but wholly and exclusively in the hands of the regional and local *Soviets of Peasants' Deputies*.

In order to improve grain production techniques and increase output, and in order to develop rational cultivation on a large scale under public control, we must strive within the peasants' committees to secure the transformation of every confiscated landed estate into a large model farm controlled by the *Soviet of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies*.

In order to counteract the petty-bourgeois phrase-mongering and the policy prevailing among the Socialist-Revolutionaries, particularly the idle talk about "subsistence" standards or "labour" standards, "socialisation of the land", etc., the party of the proletariat must make it clear that small-scale farming under commodity production *cannot* save mankind from poverty and oppression.

Without necessarily splitting the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies at once, the party of the proletariat must explain the need for organising separate Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies and separate Soviets of deputies from the poor (semi-proletarian) peasants, or, at least, for holding regular separate conferences of deputies of *this class status* in the shape of separate groups or parties within the general Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. Otherwise all the honeyed petty-bourgeois talk of the Narodniks regarding the peasants in general will serve as a shield for the deception of the propertyless mass by the wealthy peasants, who are merely a variety of *capitalists*.

To counteract the bourgeois-liberal or purely bureaucratic sermons preached by many Socialist-Revolutionaries and Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, who advise the peasants not to seize the landed estates and not to start the agrarian reform pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the party of the proletariat must urge the peasants to carry out the agrarian reform at once on their own, and to confiscate the landed estates immediately, upon the decisions of the peasants' deputies in the localities.

At the same time, it is most important to insist on the necessity of *increasing* food production for the soldiers at the front and for the towns, and on the absolute inadmissibility of causing any damage or injury to livestock, implements, machinery, buildings, etc.

14. As regards the national question, the proletarian party first of all must advocate the proclamation and immediate realisation of complete freedom of secession from Russia for all the nations and peoples who were oppressed by tsarism, or who were forcibly joined to, or forcibly kept within the boundaries of, the state, i.e., annexed.

All statements, declarations and manifestos concerning renunciation of annexations that are not accompanied by the realisation of the right of secession in practice, are nothing but bourgeois deception of the people, or else pious petty-bourgeois wishes.

The proletarian party strives to create as large a state as possible, for this is to the advantage of the working people; it strives to *draw nations closer together*, and bring about their *further fusion*; but it desires to achieve this aim not by violence, but exclusively through a free fraternal union of the workers and the working people of all nations.

The more democratic the Russian republic, and the more successfully it organises itself into a Republic of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, the more powerful will be the force of *voluntary* attraction to such a republic on the part of the working people of *all* nations.

Complete freedom of secession, the broadest local (and national) autonomy, and elaborate guarantees of the rights of national minorities—this is the programme of the revolutionary proletariat.

Nationalisation of the Banks and Capitalist Syndicates

15. Under no circumstances can the party of the proletariat set itself the aim of "introducing" socialism in a country of small peasants so long as the overwhelming majority of the population has not come to realise the need for a socialist revolution.

But only bourgeois sophists, hiding behind "near-Marxist" catchwords, can deduce from this truth a justification of the policy of postponing immediate revolutionary measures, the

time for which is fully ripe; measures which *have been* frequently *resorted to during the war by a number of bourgeois states*, and which are absolutely indispensable in order to combat impending total economic disorganisation and famine.

Such measures as the nationalisation of the land, of all the banks and capitalist syndicates, or, at least, the *immediate* establishment of the *control* of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, etc., over them—measures which do not in any way constitute the “introduction” of socialism—must be absolutely insisted on, and, whenever possible, carried out in a revolutionary way. Without such measures, which are only steps towards socialism, and which are perfectly feasible economically, it will be impossible to heal the wounds caused by the war and to avert the impending collapse; and the party of the revolutionary proletariat will never hesitate to lay hands on the fabulous profits of the capitalists and bankers, who are enriching themselves on the war in a particularly scandalous manner.

The Situation

Within the Socialist International

16. The international obligations of the working class of Russia are precisely now coming to the forefront with particular force.

Only lazy people do not swear by internationalism these days. Even the chauvinist defencists, even Plekhanov and Potresov, even Kerensky, call themselves internationalists. It becomes the duty of the proletarian party all the more urgently, therefore, to clearly, precisely and definitely counterpose internationalism in deed to internationalism in word.

Mere appeals to the workers of all countries, empty assurances of devotion to internationalism, direct or indirect attempts to fix a “sequence” of action by the revolutionary proletariat in the various belligerent countries, laborious efforts to conclude “agreements” between the socialists of the belligerent countries *on the question* of the revolutionary struggle, all the fuss over the summoning of socialist congresses *for the purpose* of a peace campaign, etc., etc.—no matter how sincere the authors of such ideas, attempts, and plans

may be—amount, as far as their *objective* significance is concerned, to mere phrase-mongering, and *at best* are innocent and pious wishes, fit only to conceal the *deception* of the people by the chauvinists. The *French* social-chauvinists, who are the most adroit and accomplished in methods of parliamentary hocus-pocus, have long since broken the record for ranting and resonant pacifist and internationalist phrases *coupled with* the incredibly brazen betrayal of socialism and the International, the acceptance of posts in governments which conduct the imperialist war, the voting of credits or loans (as Chkheidze, Skobelev, Tsereteli and Steklov have been doing recently in Russia), opposition to the revolutionary struggle in *their own country*, etc., etc.

Good people often forget the brutal and savage setting of the imperialist world war. This setting does not tolerate phrases, and mocks at innocent and pious wishes.

There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is—working whole-heartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in *one's own* country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy, and material aid) *this struggle*, this, *and only this*, line, in *every* country without exception.

Everything else is deception and Manilovism.²⁴

During the two odd years of the war the international socialist and working-class movement in *every* country has evolved three trends. Whoever ignores *reality* and refuses to recognise the existence of these three trends, to analyse them, to fight consistently for the trend that is really internationalist, is doomed to impotence, helplessness and errors.

The three trends are:

1) The social-chauvinists, i.e., socialists in word and chauvinists in deed, people who recognise “defence of the fatherland” in an imperialist war (and above all in the present imperialist war).

These people are our *class* enemies. They have gone over to the bourgeoisie.

They are the majority of the official leaders of the official Social-Democratic parties in *all* countries—Plekhanov and Co. in Russia, the Scheidemanns in Germany, Renaudel, Guesde and Sembat in France, Bissolati and Co. in Italy, Hyndman, the Fabians²⁵ and the Labourites (the leaders of the “Labour Party”²⁶) in Britain, Branting and Co. in

Sweden, Troelstra and his party in Holland, Stauning and his party in Denmark, Victor Berger and the other "defenders of the fatherland" in America, and so forth.

2) The second trend, known as the "Centre", consists of people who vacillate between the social-chauvinists and the true internationalists.

The "Centre" all vow and declare that they are Marxists and internationalists, that they are for peace, for bringing every kind of "pressure" to bear upon the governments, for "demanding" in every way that their own government should "ascertain the will of the people for peace", that they are for all sorts of peace campaigns, for peace without annexations, etc., etc.—*and for peace with the social-chauvinists*. The "Centre" is for "unity", the Centre is opposed to a split.

The "Centre" is a realm of honeyed petty-bourgeois phrases, of internationalism in word and cowardly opportunism and fawning on the social-chauvinists in deed.

The crux of the matter is that the "Centre" is not convinced of the necessity for a revolution against one's own government; it does not preach revolution; it does not carry on a whole-hearted revolutionary struggle; and in order to evade such a struggle it resorts to the tritest ultra-"Marxist"-sounding *excuses*.

The social-chauvinists are our *class enemies*, they are bourgeois within the working-class movement. They represent a stratum, or groups, or sections of the working class which *objectively* have been bribed by the bourgeoisie (by better wages, positions of honour, etc.), and which help *their own* bourgeoisie to plunder and oppress small and weak peoples and to fight *for* the division of the capitalist spoils.

The "Centre" consists of routine-worshippers, eroded by the canker of legality, corrupted by the parliamentary atmosphere, etc., bureaucrats accustomed to snug positions and soft jobs. Historically and economically speaking, they are not a *separate* stratum but represent only a *transition* from a past phase of the working-class movement—the phase between 1871 and 1914, which gave much that is valuable to the proletariat, particularly in the indispensable art of slow, sustained and systematic organisational work on a large and very large scale—to a new *phase* that became *objectively* essential with the outbreak of the first imperialist world war, which inaugurated *the era of social revolution*.

The chief leader and spokesman of the "Centre" is Karl Kautsky, the most outstanding authority in the Second International (1889-1914), since August 1914 a model of utter bankruptcy as a Marxist, the embodiment of unheard-of spinelessness, and the most wretched vacillations and betrayals. This "Centrist" trend includes Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and the so-called workers' or labour group²⁷ in the Reichstag; in France it includes Longuet, Pressemane and the so-called *minoritaires*²⁸ (Mensheviks) in general; in Britain, Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald and many other leaders of the Independent Labour Party,²⁹ and some leaders of the British Socialist Party³⁰; Morris Hillquit and many others in the United States; Turati, Trèves, Modigliani and others in Italy; Robert Grimm and others in Switzerland; Victor Adler and Co. in Austria; the party of the Organising Committee, Axelrod, Martov, Chkheidze, Tsereteli and others in Russia, and so forth.

Naturally, at times individuals unconsciously drift from the social-chauvinist to the "Centrist" position, and vice versa. Every Marxist knows that classes are distinct, even though individuals may move freely from one class to another; similarly, *trends* in political life are distinct in spite of the fact that individuals may change freely from one trend to another, and in spite of all attempts and efforts to *amalgamate* trends.

3) The third trend, that of the true internationalists, is best represented by the "Zimmerwald Left".³¹ (We reprint as a supplement its manifesto of September 1915, to enable the reader to learn of the inception of this trend at first hand.)

Its distinctive feature is its complete break with both social-chauvinism and "Centrism", and its gallant revolutionary struggle against *its own* imperialist government and *its own* imperialist bourgeoisie. Its principle is: "Our chief enemy is at home." It wages a ruthless struggle against honeyed social-pacifist phrases (a social-pacifist is a socialist in word and a bourgeois pacifist in deed; bourgeois pacifists dream of an everlasting peace *without* the overthrow of the yoke and domination of capital) and against all *subterfuges* employed to deny the possibility, or the appropriateness, or the timeliness of a proletarian revolutionary struggle and of a proletarian socialist revolution *in connection* with the present war.

The most outstanding representative of this trend in Germany is the Spartacus group or the *Internationale* group,³² to which Karl Liebknecht belongs. Karl Liebknecht is a most celebrated representative of this trend and of the *new*, and genuine, proletarian International.

Karl Liebknecht called upon the workers and soldiers of Germany to *turn their guns against their own* government. Karl Liebknecht did that openly from the rostrum of parliament (the Reichstag). He then went to a demonstration in Potsdamer Platz, one of the largest public squares in Berlin, with illegally printed leaflets proclaiming the slogan "Down with the Government!" He was arrested and sentenced to *hard labour*. He is now serving his term in a German convict prison, like *hundreds*, if not thousands, of other *true* German socialists who have been imprisoned for their anti-war activities.

Karl Liebknecht in his speeches and letters mercilessly attacked not only *his own* Plekhanovs and Potresovs (Scheidemanns, Legiens, Davids and Co.), *but also his own Centrists*, his own Chkheidzes and Tseretelis (Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and Co.).

Karl Liebknecht and his friend Otto Rühle, two out of one hundred and ten deputies, violated discipline, destroyed the "unity" with the "Centre" and the chauvinists, and *went against all of them*. Liebknecht *alone* represents socialism, the proletarian cause, the proletarian revolution. *All* the rest of German Social-Democracy, to quote the apt words of Rosa Luxemburg (also a member and one of the leaders of the Spartacus group), is a "*stinking corpse*".

Another group of true internationalists in Germany is that of the Bremen paper *Arbeiterpolitik*.

Closest to the internationalists in deed are: in France, Loriot and his friends (Bourderon and Merrheim have slid down to social-pacifism), as well as the Frenchman Henri Guilbeaux, who publishes in Geneva the journal *Demain*; in Britain, the newspaper *The Trade Unionist*, and *some* of the members of the British Socialist Party and of the Independent Labour Party (for instance, Russel Williams, who openly called for a break with the leaders who have *betrayed* socialism), the Scottish socialist schoolteacher *MacLean*, who was sentenced to *hard labour* by the bourgeois government of Britain for his revolutionary fight against the war, and hundreds of British socialists who are in jail for the same

offence. They, and they alone, are internationalists *in deed*. In the United States, the Socialist Labour Party³³ and those within the opportunist Socialist Party³⁴ who in January 1917 began publication of the paper, *The Internationalist*; in Holland, the Party of the "Tribunists"³⁵ which publishes the paper *De Tribune* (Pannekoek, Herman Gorter, Wijnkoop, and Henriette Roland-Holst, who, although Centrist at Zimmerwald, has now joined our ranks); in Sweden, the Party of the Young, or the Left,³⁶ led by Lindhagen, Ture Nerman, Carleson, Ström and Z. Höglund, who at Zimmerwald was personally active in the organisation of the "Zimmerwald Left", and who is now in prison for his revolutionary fight against the war; in Denmark, Trier and his friends who have left the now purely *bourgeois* "Social-Democratic" Party of Denmark, headed by the *Minister* Stauning; in Bulgaria, the "Tesnyaki"³⁷; in Italy, the nearest are Constantino Lazzari, secretary of the party, and Serrati, editor of the central organ, *Avanti!*³⁸; in Poland, Radek, Hanecki and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the "Regional Executive", and Rosa Luxemburg, Tyszka and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the "Chief Executive"; in Switzerland, those of the Left who drew up the argument for the "referendum" (January 1917) in order to fight the social-chauvinists and the "Centre" in *their own* country and who at the Zurich Cantonal Socialist Convention, held at Töss on February 11, 1917, moved a consistently revolutionary resolution against the war; in Austria, the young Left-wing friends of Friedrich Adler, who acted partly through the Karl Marx Club in Vienna, now closed by the arch-reactionary Austrian Government, which is ruining Adler's life for his heroic though ill-considered shooting at a minister, and so on.

It is not a question of shades of opinion, which certainly exist even among the Lefts. It is a question of *trend*. The thing is that it is not easy to be an internationalist in deed during a terrible imperialist war. Such people are few; but it is on such people *alone* that the future of socialism depends; they *alone* are *the leaders of the people*, and not their corrupters.

The distinction between the reformists and the revolutionaries, among the Social-Democrats, and socialists generally, was objectively bound to undergo a change under the conditions of the imperialist war. Those who confine themselves

to "demanding" that the bourgeois governments should conclude peace or "ascertain the will of the peoples for peace", etc., are *actually* slipping into reforms. *For, objectively, the problem of the war can be solved only in a revolutionary way.*

There is no possibility of this war ending in a democratic, non-coercive peace or of the people being relieved of the burden of *billions* paid in interest to the capitalists, who have made fortunes out of the war, except through a revolution of the proletariat.

The most varied reforms can and must be demanded of the bourgeois governments, but one cannot, without sinking to Manilovism and reformism, demand that people and classes entangled by the thousands of threads of imperialist capital should *tear* those threads. And unless they are torn, all talk of a war against war is idle and deceitful prattle.

The "Kautskyites", the "Centre", are revolutionaries in word and reformists in deed, they are internationalists in word and accomplices of the social-chauvinists in deed.

The Collapse of the Zimmerwald International.— The Need for Founding a Third International

17. From the very outset, the Zimmerwald International adopted a vacillating, "Kautskyite", "Centrist" position, which immediately compelled the *Zimmerwald Left* to dissociate itself, to separate itself from the rest, and to issue *its own* manifesto (published in Switzerland in Russian, German and French).

The chief shortcoming of the Zimmerwald International, and the cause of its *collapse* (for politically and ideologically it has already collapsed), was its vacillation and indecision on such a momentous issue of *crucial* practical significance as that of breaking completely with social-chauvinism and the old social-chauvinist International, headed by Vandervelde and Huysmans at The Hague (Holland), etc.

It is not as yet known in Russia that the Zimmerwald majority *are nothing but Kautskyites*. Yet this is the fundamental fact, one which cannot be ignored, and which is now generally known in Western Europe. Even that chauvinist, that extreme German chauvinist, Heilmann, editor of the

ultra-chauvinistic *Chemnitzer Volksstimme* and contributor to Parvus's ultra-chauvinistic *Glocke* (a "Social-Democrat", of course, and an ardent partisan of Social-Democratic "unity"), was compelled to acknowledge in the press that the Centre, or "Kautskyism", and the *Zimmerwald majority* were one and the same thing.

This fact was definitely established at the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917. Although social-pacifism was condemned by the Kienthal Manifesto,³⁹ the *whole* Zimmerwald Right, the *entire* Zimmerwald majority, sank to social-pacifism: Kautsky and Co. in a series of utterances in January and February 1917; Bourderon and Merrheim in France, who cast their votes *in unanimity* with the social-chauvinists for the pacifist resolutions of the Socialist Party (December 1916) and of the Confédération Générale du Travail (the national organisation of the French trade unions, also in December 1916); Turati and Co. in Italy, where the entire party took up a social-pacifist position, while Turati himself, in a speech delivered on December 17, 1916, "slipped" (not by accident, of course) into *nationalist* phrases whitewashing the imperialist war.

In January 1917, the chairman of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, Robert Grimm, joined the social-chauvinists in *his own* party (Greulich, Pflüger, Gustav Müller and others) *against* the internationalists in deed.

At two conferences of *Zimmerwaldists* from various countries in January and February 1917, this equivocal, double-faced behaviour of the Zimmerwald majority was formally stigmatised by the Left internationalists of several countries: by Münzenberg, secretary of the international youth organisation and editor of the excellent internationalist publication *Die Jugendinternationale*⁴⁰; by Zinoviev, representative of the Central Committee of our Party; by K. Radek of the Polish Social-Democratic Party (the "Regional Executive"), and by Hartstein, a German Social-Democrat and member of the Spartacus group.

Much is given to the Russian proletariat; nowhere in the world has the working class yet succeeded in developing so much revolutionary energy as in Russia. But to whom much is given, of him much is required.

The Zimmerwald bog can no longer be tolerated. We must not, for the sake of the Zimmerwald "Kautskyites", continue the semi-alliance with the chauvinist International of the

Plekhanovs and Scheidemanns. We must break with this International immediately. We must remain in Zimmerwald *only* for purposes of information.

It is we who must found, and right now, without delay, a *new*, revolutionary, proletarian International, or rather, we must not fear to acknowledge publicly that this new International is *already established* and operating.

This is the International of those "internationalists in deed" whom I precisely listed above. They and they alone are representatives of the revolutionary, internationalist mass, and not their corrupters.

And if socialists of *that type* are few, let every Russian worker ask himself whether there were many really class-conscious revolutionaries in Russia *on the eve* of the February-March revolution of 1917.

It is not a question of numbers, but of giving correct expression to the ideas and policies of the truly revolutionary proletariat. The thing is not to "proclaim" internationalism, but to be able to be an internationalist in deed, even when times are most trying.

Let us not deceive ourselves with hopes of agreements and international congresses. As long as the imperialist war is on, international intercourse is held in the iron vise of the military dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie. If even the "republican" Milyukov, who is obliged to tolerate the parallel government of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, *did not allow Fritz Platten*, the Swiss socialist, secretary of the party, an internationalist and participant in the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, to enter Russia in April 1917, in spite of the fact that Platten has a Russian wife and was on his way to visit his wife's relatives, and in spite of the fact that he had taken part in the revolution of 1905 in Riga, for which he had been confined in a Russian prison, had given bail to the tsarist government for his release and wished to recover that bail—if the "republican" Milyukov could *do* such a thing in April 1917 in Russia, one can judge what value can be put on the promises and assurances, the phrases and declarations of the bourgeoisie on the subject of peace without annexations, and so on.

And the arrest of Trotsky by the British Government? And the refusal to allow Martov to leave Switzerland, and the attempt to lure him to Britain, where Trotsky's fate awaits him?

Let us harbour no illusions. We must not deceive ourselves.

To "wait" for international congresses or conferences is simply to *betray* internationalism, since it has been shown that even from Stockholm neither socialists loyal to internationalism *nor even their letters* are allowed to come here, although this is quite possible and although a ferocious military censorship exists.

Our Party must not "wait", but must immediately *found* a Third International. Hundreds of socialists imprisoned in Germany and Britain will then heave a sigh of relief, thousands and thousands of German workers who are now holding strikes and demonstrations that are frightening that scoundrel and brigand, Wilhelm, will learn from *illegal* leaflets of our decision, of our fraternal confidence in Karl Liebknecht, and in him alone, of *our* decision to fight "revolutionary defencism" *even now*; they will read this and be strengthened in their revolutionary internationalism.

To whom much is given, of him much is required. No other country in the world is as free as Russia is *now*. Let us make use of this freedom, not to advocate support for the bourgeoisie, or bourgeois "revolutionary defencism", but in a bold, honest, proletarian, Liebknecht way *to found the Third International*, an International uncompromisingly hostile both to the social-chauvinist traitors and to the vacillating "Centrists".

18. After what has been said, there is no need to waste many words explaining that the amalgamation of Social-Democrats in Russia is out of the question.

It is better to remain with one friend only, like Liebknecht, and *that means remaining with the revolutionary proletariat*, than to entertain even for a moment any thought of amalgamation with the party of the Organising Committee, with Chkheidze and Tsereteli, who can tolerate a bloc with Potresov in *Rabochaya Gazeta*, who voted for the loan in the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies,⁴¹ and who have sunk to "defencism".

Let the dead bury their dead.

Whoever wants to *help* the waverers must first stop wavering himself.

What Should Be the Name of Our Party— One That Will Be Correct Scientifically and Help to Clarify the Mind of the Proletariat Politically?

19. I now come to the final point, the name of our Party. We must call ourselves the *Communist Party*—just as Marx and Engels called themselves.

We must repeat that we are Marxists and that we take as our basis the *Communist Manifesto*, which has been distorted and betrayed by the Social-Democrats on two main points: (1) the working men have no country: “defence of the fatherland” in an imperialist war is a betrayal of socialism; and (2) the Marxist doctrine of the state has been distorted by the Second International.

The name “Social-Democracy” is *scientifically* incorrect, as Marx frequently pointed out, in particular, in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* in 1875, and as Engels reaffirmed in a more popular form in 1894.⁴² From capitalism mankind can pass directly only to socialism, i.e., to the social ownership of the means of production and the distribution of products according to the amount of work performed by each individual. Our Party looks farther ahead: socialism must inevitably evolve gradually into communism, upon the banner of which is inscribed the motto, “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs”.

That is my first argument.

Here is the second: the second part of the name of our Party (Social-Democrats) is also scientifically incorrect. Democracy is a form of *state*, whereas we Marxists are opposed to *every kind* of state.

The leaders of the Second International (1889-1914), Plekhanov, Kautsky and their like, have vulgarised and distorted Marxism.

Marxism differs from anarchism in that it recognises *the need for a state* for the purpose of the transition to socialism; but (and here is where we differ from Kautsky and Co.) *not a state of the type* of the usual parliamentary bourgeois-democratic republic, but a state like the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Soviets of Workers’ Deputies of 1905 and 1917.

My third argument: *living reality*, the revolution, has *already actually* established in our country, albeit in a weak

and embryonic form, precisely this new type of "state", which is not a state in the proper sense of the word.

This is *already* a matter of the practical action of the people, and not merely a theory of the leaders.

The state in the proper sense of the term is domination over the people by contingents of armed men divorced from the people.

Our *emergent*, new state is also a state, for we too need contingents of armed men, we too need the *strictest* order, and must *ruthlessly* crush by force all attempts at either a tsarist or a Guchkov-bourgeois counter-revolution.

But our *emergent*, new state is *no longer* a state in the proper sense of the term, for in some parts of Russia these contingents of armed men are *the masses themselves*, the entire people, and not certain privileged persons placed over the people, and divorced from the people, and for all practical purposes undisplaceable.

We must look forward, and not backward to the usual bourgeois type of democracy, which consolidated the rule of the bourgeoisie with the aid of the old, *monarchist* organs of administration, the police, the army and the bureaucracy.

We must look forward to the emergent new democracy, which is already ceasing to be a democracy, for democracy means the domination of the people, and the armed people cannot dominate themselves.

The term democracy is not only scientifically incorrect when applied to a Communist Party; it has now, since March 1917, simply become *blinkers* put on the eyes of the revolutionary people and *preventing* them from boldly and freely, on their own initiative, building up the new: the Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and all other Deputies, as *the sole power* in the "state" and as the harbinger of the "withering away" of the state *in every form*.

My fourth argument: we must reckon with the actual situation in which socialism finds itself internationally.

It is not what it was during the years 1871 to 1914, when Marx and Engels knowingly put up with the inaccurate, opportunist term "Social-Democracy". For *in those days*, after the defeat of the Paris Commune, history made slow organisational and educational work the task of the day. Nothing else was possible. The anarchists were then (as they are now) fundamentally wrong not only theoretically, but also economically and politically. The anarchists misjudged the

character of the times, for they failed to understand the world situation: the worker of Britain corrupted by imperialist profits, the Commune defeated in Paris, the recent (1871) triumph of the bourgeois national movement in Germany, the age-long sleep of semi-feudal Russia.

Marx and Engels gauged the times accurately; they understood the international situation; they understood that the approach to the beginning of the social revolution must be *slow*.

We, in our turn, must also understand the specific features and tasks of the new era. Let us not imitate those sorry Marxists of whom Marx said: "I have sown dragon's teeth and harvested fleas."⁴³

The objective inevitability of capitalism which grew into imperialism brought about the imperialist war. The war has brought mankind to the *brink of a precipice*, to the brink of the destruction of civilisation, of the brutalisation and destruction of more millions, countless millions, of human beings.

The *only* way out is through a proletarian revolution.

At the very moment when such a revolution is beginning, when it is taking its first hesitant, groping steps, steps betraying too great a confidence in the bourgeoisie, at such a moment the majority (that is the truth, that is a fact) of the "Social-Democratic" leaders, of the "Social-Democratic" parliamentarians, of the "Social-Democratic" newspapers—and these are precisely the *organs* that influence the people—have *deserted* socialism, have *betrayed* socialism and have gone over to the side of "their own" national bourgeoisie.

The people have been confused, led astray and deceived by *these* leaders.

And we shall aid and abet that deception if we retain the old and out-of-date Party name, which is as decayed as the Second International!

Granted that "many" workers *understand* Social-Democracy in an honest way; but it is time to learn how to distinguish the subjective from the objective.

Subjectively, such Social-Democratic workers are most loyal leaders of the proletarians.

Objectively, however, the world situation is such that the old name of our Party *makes it easier* to fool the people and *impedes* the onward march; for at every step, in every paper,

in every parliamentary group, the masses see *leaders*, i.e., people whose voices carry farthest and whose actions are most conspicuous; yet they are all "would-be Social-Democrats", they are all "for unity" with the betrayers of socialism, with the social-chauvinists; and they are all presenting for payment the old bills issued by "Social-Democracy". . . .

And what are the arguments against? . . . We'll be confused with the Anarchist-Communists, they say. . . .

Why are we not afraid of being confused with the Social-Nationalists, the Social-Liberals, or the Radical-Socialists, the foremost bourgeois party in the French Republic and the most adroit in the bourgeois deception of the people? . . . We are told: The people are used to it, the workers have come to "love" *their* Social-Democratic Party.

That is the only argument. But it is an argument that dismisses the science of Marxism, the tasks of the morrow in the revolution, the objective position of world socialism, the shameful collapse of the Second International, and the harm done to the practical cause by the packs of "would-be Social-Democrats" who surround the proletarians.

It is an argument of routinism, an argument of inertia, an argument of stagnation.

But we are out to rebuild the world. We are out to put an end to the imperialist world war into which hundreds of millions of people have been drawn and in which the interests of billions and billions of capital are involved, a war which cannot end in a truly democratic peace without the greatest proletarian revolution in the history of mankind.

Yet we are afraid of our own selves. We are loth to cast off the "dear old" soiled shirt. . . .

But it is time to cast off the soiled shirt and to put on clean linen.

Petrograd, April 10, 1917

Postscript

My pamphlet has become out of date owing to the general economic disorganisation and the inefficiency of the St. Petersburg presses. The pamphlet was written on April 10, 1917, today is May 28, and it has not come out yet!

It was written as a *draft* platform to propagandise my views *before* the All-Russia Conference of our Party, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party of Bolsheviks. The pamphlet was typed in several copies and handed out to Party members before and during the Conference so that it did its job in part. But the Conference took place from April 24 to April 29, 1917,⁴⁴ its resolutions have long since been published (see supplement to *Soldatskaya Pravda* No. 13⁴⁵) and the attentive reader will have noticed that my pamphlet often served as the original draft of those resolutions.

It is left for me to express the hope that the pamphlet will still be of some value because of its connection with those resolutions and because it explains them, and to deal here with two points.

I suggested on page 27 that we remain in Zimmerwald only for purposes of information.* The Conference did not agree with me on this point, and I had to vote against the resolution on the International. It is now becoming obvious that the Conference made a mistake and that the course taken by events will soon correct it. By remaining in Zimmerwald we (even against our will) are helping delay the creation of the Third International; we are indirectly hampering its foundation, being burdened with the dead ballast of the ideologically and politically dead Zimmerwald.

* See p. 50 of this book.—Ed.

In the eyes of the working-class parties of the whole world, our Party's position is now such that it is our *duty* to *found* a Third International without delay. *Today* there is nobody but us to do it, and procrastination can only do harm. If we remain in Zimmerwald for information only, we shall have our hands freed to establish the new International (and at the same time be able to *use* Zimmerwald should circumstances make it possible).

Because of the mistake made by the Conference, we must now wait passively, at least until July 5, 1917 (the date set for the Zimmerwald Conference, provided it is not postponed *again*! It has already been postponed once. . .).

The decision unanimously adopted by the Central Committee of our Party after the Conference and published in *Pravda* No. 55, on May 12, has, however, gone half-way towards correcting the mistake; it has been resolved that we shall walk out of Zimmerwald if they decide to confer with ministers.* I express the hope that the other half of the mistake will be speedily remedied, as soon as we convene the first international conference of Lefts (the "third trend", the "internationalists in deed", see above, pp. 23-25**).

The second point I must deal with is the formation of the "coalition cabinet" on May 6, 1917.⁴⁶ On this point the pamphlet may *seem* to be particularly out of date.

But actually on this of all points it is not out of date at all. It is based *wholly* on the *class* analysis, a thing that the Mensheviks and Narodniks, who have provided six ministers as hostages to the ten capitalist ministers, stand in deadly fear of. And it is because the pamphlet is based wholly on a class analysis that it is not out of date—the only change made by Tsereteli, Chernov and Co. joining the cabinet was an *insignificant* one in the *form* of the agreement between the Petrograd Soviet and the capitalist government, and I deliberately stressed in my pamphlet (on page 8) that "I am referring not so much to the formal agreement as to actual support".***

With each passing day it is becoming clearer that Tsereteli, Chernov and Co. are nothing more than hostages to the capitalists, that the "renewed" government is neither willing

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 388.—Ed.

** See pp. 45-48 of this book.—Ed.

*** See p. 31 of this book.—Ed.

nor able to carry out any of its abundant promises either in foreign or domestic policies. Chernov, Tsereteli and Co. have committed political suicide by turning into assistants of the capitalists, into people who are actually strangling the revolution; Kerensky has come so low as to use force against the masses (cf. p. 9 of the pamphlet: "Guchkov is still only threatening to employ violence against the mass"* but Kerensky *had to* carry out those threats⁴⁷). Chernov, Tsereteli and Co. have killed themselves and their parties—the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—politically. The people will realise this more and more clearly as the days go by.

The coalition cabinet is only a passing moment in the development of the fundamental class contradictions of our revolution briefly analysed in the pamphlet. This situation cannot last long—we must either go backward to counter-revolution all along the line or forward to the transfer of state power to other classes. At a time of revolution, when the imperialist world war is in progress, we cannot stand still.

N. Lenin

St. Petersburg, May 28, 1917

Written April 10 (23), 1917
Postscript written May 28
(June 10), 1917

Published as a pamphlet in
Petrograd in September 1917
by Priboi Publishers
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 55-91

* See p. 32 of this book—*Ed.*

Notes

- ¹ Published in the April 7, 1917 issue of *Pravda* No. 26, the article, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution", signed N. Lenin, contains the famous *April Theses*, which, apparently, Lenin wrote while en route to Petrograd by train.

Lenin read the theses at two meetings held at the Taurida Palace on April 4 (17), 1917 (at a meeting of Bolsheviks and at a joint meeting of Bolshevik and Menshevik delegates to the All-Russia Conference of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies).

The article was reprinted in the Bolshevik newspapers *Sotsial-Demokrat* (Moscow), *Proletary* (Kharkov), *Krasnoyarsky Rabochy* (Krasnoyarsk), *Uperyod* (Ufa), *Bakinsky Rabochy* (Baku), *Kavkazsky Rabochy* (Tiflis), among others. p. 7

- ² *Mensheviks*—adherents to a petty-bourgeois, opportunist trend in the Russian Social-Democratic movement; they helped spread bourgeois influence within the working class. The Mensheviks (a derivative of the Russian word *menshinstvo* meaning minority) received their name at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in August 1903, when they were a minority in the election of Party central bodies. The revolutionary Social-Democrats headed by Lenin were in the majority and came to be known as Bolsheviks (from the Russian word *bolshinstvo* meaning majority). The Mensheviks, pursuing an opportunist line in the working-class movement, endeavoured to effect a compromise between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia was followed by a period of dual power: the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie as personified by the Provisional Government and the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry as personified by the Soviets. Representatives of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries entered the Provisional Government, supported its imperialist policy and fought against the approaching proletarian revolution. In the Soviets the Mensheviks pursued the same policy of supporting the Provisional Government and diverting the masses from the revolutionary movement.

After the October Revolution the Mensheviks became an openly counter-revolutionary party which sponsored conspiracies and revolts against Soviet power. p. 7

³ *Popular Socialists*—members of the petty-bourgeois Labour Popular-Socialist Party, which split from the Right wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party in 1906. The Popular Socialists put forward moderate democratic demands within the framework of a constitutional monarchy; they abandoned the demand for socialisation of the land, envisaged in the S.R. programme, and advocated the obligatory transference of landed estates but on a redemption basis. The party's leaders, among others, were A. V. Peshekhonov, V. A. Myakotin and N. F. Annensky.

After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution the Popular-Socialist Party actively supported the bourgeois Provisional Government and joined the counter-revolutionary camp.

Socialist-Revolutionaries (S.R.s)—a petty-bourgeois party formed at the end of 1901 and the beginning of 1902. The S.R.s demanded the abolition of landed estates and advanced the slogan of "equalitarian land tenure on the basis of the labour principle". The Socialist-Revolutionaries did not recognise class differences between the proletariat and the peasantry; they glossed over contradictions within the peasantry and denied the proletariat's leading role in the revolution. The S.R.s, in their struggle against the autocracy, resorted to individual terrorism. After the defeat of the 1905-07 revolution most of the S.R.s defected to bourgeois liberalism. Subsequent to the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution the Socialist-Revolutionary leaders participated in the Provisional Government; they pursued a policy of suppressing the peasant movement and gave unqualified support to the bourgeoisie and landowners in their struggle against the working class which was preparing for socialist revolution. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution the S.R.s. actively participated in the armed struggle which the bourgeois and landowner counter-revolution waged against Soviet power.

The Organising Committee was created in 1912 at the August Conference of the Menshevik liquidators and the other anti-Party groups and trends. It functioned as a Menshevik centre until the election of the Central Committee of the Menshevik Party in August 1917.

p. 9

⁴ *Yedinstvo* (Unity)—a newspaper published in Petrograd by the extreme Right of the Menshevik defencists, headed by Plekhanov. Four issues of the paper were published in May and June of 1914. From March to November 1917 it appeared as a daily. In December 1917 and January 1918 it was issued under the name of *Nashe Yedinstvo* (Our Unity). The paper gave support to the Provisional Government, advocating coalition with the bourgeoisie and "firm power". In its attacks on the Bolsheviks the paper often resorted to gutter press tactics. It espoused a hostile attitude to the October Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power.

p. 10

⁵ *Russkaya Volya* (Russian Freedom)—a bourgeois daily newspaper founded by the tsarist Minister of the Interior A. D. Protopopov and run by the large banks; it first appeared in Petrograd in December 1916. After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution the paper conducted a slander campaign against the Bolsheviks. On October 25, 1917 the Revolutionary Military Committee halted its publication.

p. 11

- ⁶ See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Preface to the German edition of 1872; Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*. Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association; *Critique of the Gotha Programme*; Engels's letter to Bebel of March 18-28, 1875; Marx's letters to Kugelmann of April 12 and 17, 1871. (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, pp. 98-99; Vol. 2, pp. 217-234; Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, pp. 13-37; Vol. 2, pp. 420-22; *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 290-96.) p. 12
- ⁷ On August 4, 1914, the Social-Democrats in the German Reichstag voted in favour of granting war loans to the government of Wilhelm II. p. 12
- ⁸ Lenin's pamphlet *Letters on Tactics. First Letter* was issued in Petrograd in 1917 by the Bolshevik publishing house Priboi in three editions. The first edition appeared prior to April 27 (May 10), as reported in No. 42 of *Pravda*. This enabled the delegates to the Seventh (April) Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. (B.) to read the pamphlet before the resolution on the current situation was put to a vote (the voting was to take place on April 29 [May 12]). Lenin's April Theses were included as a supplement in all three editions. p. 13
- ⁹ *Pravda* (The Truth)—a legal Bolshevik daily, published in St. Petersburg. The first issue appeared on April 22 (May 5), 1912. Lenin was the paper's ideological leader.
Today, *Pravda* is the Central Organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. p. 13
- ¹⁰ See Engels's letter to F. Sorge dated November 29, 1886 (Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 395-98). p. 14
- ¹¹ Lenin quotes Mephistopheles from Goethe's tragedy *Faust*. Erster Teil, Studierzimmer. p. 16
- ¹² The expression "*His Majesty's Opposition*" belongs to P. N. Milyukov, the leader of the Constitutional-Democratic Party. In a speech at a luncheon given by the Lord Mayor of London on June 19 (July 2), 1909, Milyukov said: "So long as there is a legislative chamber in Russia which controls the budget, the Russian opposition will remain the Opposition of His Majesty, not to His Majesty" (*Rech* No. 167, June 21 [July 4], 1909). p. 19
- ¹³ "*No Tsar, but a workers' government*"—an anti-Bolshevik slogan put forward in 1905 by Parvus. This slogan was a prime postulate of the Trotskyite theory of permanent revolution, a revolution without the peasantry. This "theory" opposed the Leninist theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution developing into a socialist revolution with the proletariat being the leader of the mass popular movement. p. 19
- ¹⁴ See Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*. Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association; Frederick Engels, Introduction to *The Civil War in France* (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, pp. 217-234, 178-179). p. 19

- ¹⁵ *Blanquism*—a trend in the French socialist movement, headed by Louis Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881), an outstanding French revolutionary and prominent representative of utopian communism. Marxist-Leninist classics criticised him for his sectarianism and conspiratorial methods of struggle. Blanquists substituted action by a secret group of plotters for activity of a revolutionary party; they failed to take account of the concrete situation in which an uprising could be victorious and ignored ties with the masses. p. 19
- ¹⁶ Lenin refers to Plekhanov's pamphlet *Anarchism and Socialism*, first published in the German language in Berlin in 1894. p. 20
- ¹⁷ Lenin makes reference here to the volume of his writings published in St. Petersburg at the end of 1907: Vl. Ilyin, *Twelve Years. A Collection of Articles. Volume I. Two Trends in Russian Marxism and Russian Social-Democracy*. p. 22
- ¹⁸ *Cadets*—members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, the principal party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia. Founded in October 1905, the party was comprised of representatives of the bourgeoisie, landowners and bourgeois intellectuals. The Cadets fully supported the tsarist government's predatory foreign policy during the First World War. In the period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917 they endeavoured to preserve the monarchy. Utilising their key positions in the bourgeois Provisional Government, they pursued a counter-revolutionary policy opposed to the interests of the people. Subsequent to the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution the Cadets acted as irreconcilable enemies of Soviet power. They participated in all the counter-revolutionary armed actions and campaigns of the interventionists. p. 26
- ¹⁹ *Trudoviks* (the Trudovik group)—a group of petty-bourgeois democrats in the Russian Duma, consisting of peasants and intellectuals of Narodnik tendencies. The Trudovik group was formed in April 1906 by the peasant deputies of the First Duma. In the Duma the Trudoviks vacillated between the Cadets and the revolutionary Social-Democrats. During the First World War most of the Trudoviks adopted a social-chauvinist stand.

After the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917 the Trudoviks, expressing the interests of the kulaks, actively supported the Provisional Government. The Trudoviks adopted a hostile attitude to the Great October Socialist Revolution and sided with the bourgeois counter-revolution. p. 27
- ²⁰ *Narodism*—a petty-bourgeois trend in the Russian revolutionary movement, which was manifest in the sixties and seventies of the last century. The Narodniks advocated abolition of the autocracy and transfer of the landed estates to the peasantry. At the same time they failed to see the inevitability of capitalist relations developing in Russia, and this led them to repudiate the leading role of the proletariat and regard the peasantry as the prime revolutionary force. Their estimation of the village commune as an embryo of socialism and their attempt to rouse the peasantry to resist the autocracy induced the Narodniks to go to the villages, "to the people", where, however, they failed to get a response.

In the eighties and nineties the Narodniks began to urge reconciliation with tsarism and became exponents of kulak interests and confirmed enemies of Marxism. p. 31

²¹ A quotation from Krylov's fable "The Cat and the Cook". p. 32

²² See Engels's letter to August Bebel of March 18-28, 1875 (Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 290-96). p. 36

²³ See Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*. Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, p. 223). p. 37

²⁴ *Manilovism*—from Manilov, a character in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, whose name has become synonymous with complacency, inactivity and futile day-dreaming. p. 43

²⁵ This refers to the *Fabian Society*—an English reformist organisation founded in 1884. Its membership consisted chiefly of bourgeois intellectuals—scholars, writers and politicians (Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Ramsay MacDonald and George Bernard Shaw, among others). They rejected the need for proletarian class struggle and socialist revolution, maintaining that the transition from capitalism to socialism could be effected by means of minor and gradual reforms. In 1900 the Fabian Society joined the Labour Party. p. 43

²⁶ *The Labour Party* was formed in 1900 as an amalgamation of trade unions, socialist organisations and groups with the objective of electing workers' representatives to Parliament (Labour Representation Committee). In 1906 the Committee came to be known as the Labour Party. Originally the Labour Party united only workers (later a considerable number of petty-bourgeois elements joined it); due to its ideology and tactics, it is in effect an opportunist organisation. Since the formation of the party its leaders have pursued a policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. During the First World War (1914-18), Labour Party leaders took a social-chauvinist stand.

Labour governments have always been the instruments of Britain's imperialist policy. p. 43

²⁷ *Workers' or labour Social-Democratic group (Arbeitsgemeinschaft)*—an organisation of the German Centrists formed in March 1916 by breakaway members of the Social-Democratic group in the Reichstag. It formed the core of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, founded in April 1917, which sought to justify overt social-chauvinists and advocated unity with them. p. 45

²⁸ *Minoritaires or Longuetists*—the minority that developed in the French Socialist Party in 1915. The minoritaires, followers of the social-reformist Longuet, held Centrist views and pursued a conciliatory policy regarding social-chauvinists. During the First World War they adopted a social-pacifist stand. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia they declared themselves adherents of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but in reality remained hostile to it. They continued a policy of co-operation with social-chauvinists and supported the predatory Treaty of Versailles. Confronted with

a Left-wing predominance at the congress of the French Socialist Party held in Tours in December 1920 and themselves in the minority, the Longuetists, jointly with open reformists, broke with the party and affiliated with the so-called Two-and-a-Half International. After its collapse they returned to the Second International. p. 45

- ²⁹ *The Independent Labour Party*—a reformist organisation founded in 1893 during the active strike movement and the increasing drive for independence of the British working class from the bourgeois parties. The leaders of the party were James Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald. From its very inception, the I.L.P. maintained a bourgeois-reformist position, concentrating its efforts on parliamentary forms of struggle and parliamentary deals with the Liberal Party. In the words of Lenin, the Independent Labour Party was “an opportunist party that has always been dependent on the bourgeoisie” (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 494).

At the outbreak of the imperialist world war the I.L.P. issued a manifesto against the war, but shortly afterwards adopted a social-chauvinist position. p. 45

- ³⁰ *The British Socialist Party* was founded in 1911 in Manchester, as a result of the merging of the Social-Democratic Party with other socialist groups. The B.S.P. conducted propaganda in the spirit of Marxist ideas; it was “not opportunist and was really independent of the Liberals” (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 273). However, due to its small membership and limited contact with the masses, it was somewhat sectarian in character. At the time of the First World War a sharp struggle developed in the party between the internationalist trend (William Gallacher, Albert Inkpin, John MacLean and Theodor Rothstein, among others) and the social-chauvinist trend headed by Hyndman. Within the internationalist trend, however, there were inconsistent elements who took a Centrist stand on a number of issues. In February 1916 a group of the party’s active members founded the newspaper *The Call*, which played an important part in uniting the internationalists. The annual conference of the B.S.P. held at Salford in April 1916 condemned the social-chauvinist position taken by Hyndman and his followers, and they withdrew from the party.

The British Socialist Party hailed the October Socialist Revolution, and its members actively participated in the British working people’s movement in defence of Soviet Russia against foreign intervention. In 1919 the majority of the party organisations (98 against 4) voted in favour of joining the Communist International. The B.S.P., together with the Communist Unity Group, played a leading role in the formation of the Communist Party of Great Britain. At the First (Unity) Congress held in 1920 the overwhelming majority of the B.S.P. locals joined the Communist Party. p. 45

- ³¹ *The Zimmerwald Left group* was founded in September 1915 on Lenin’s initiative at the International Socialist Conference held in Zimmerwald. It consisted of delegates from the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., the Left Social-Democrats of Sweden, Norway, Switzerland and Germany, the Polish Social-Democratic opposition as well as the Social-Democrats of the Latvian Area. The Zimmerwald Left group, headed by Lenin, waged a struggle against the Centrist

majority of the conference. It moved draft resolutions condemning the imperialist war, exposing the betrayal by the social-chauvinists and urging the necessity for intensified anti-war struggle. These draft resolutions were rejected by the Centrist majority. However, the Zimmerwald Left succeeded in including in the manifesto adopted by the conference a number of important points from its own draft resolution. The group declared that while remaining within the Zimmerwald organisation they would disseminate their views and work independently on an international scale.

The Bolsheviks, the only group to adopt a consistent internationalist stand, were the guiding force in the Zimmerwald Left which soon became the rallying point for internationalist elements of world Social-Democracy. The Social-Democrats of various countries who belonged to the Zimmerwald Left group conducted active revolutionary work and played an important role in the founding of Communist Parties in their respective countries. p. 45

- ³² The *Internationale* group—a revolutionary organisation of German Left Social-Democrats, founded at the beginning of the First World War by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin, Julian Marchlewski, Leon Jogiches (Tyska) and Wilhelm Pieck. In 1915, the group issued political leaflets and in 1916 commenced illegal publication and dissemination of its *Political Letters* signed Spartacus (which appeared regularly until October 1918), and came to be known also by that name.

The Spartacus group conducted revolutionary propaganda among the masses, organised mass anti-war demonstrations, directed strike struggles and exposed the imperialist nature of the world war and the treachery of the opportunist Social-Democratic leaders. The group was not free, however, from serious errors on the most important questions of theory and policy: they denied the possibility of national liberation wars in the epoch of imperialism, were inconsistent on the question of turning the imperialist war into a civil war, underestimated the role of the proletarian party as the vanguard of the working class and were opposed to a decisive break with the opportunists.

In April 1917, the Spartacus group joined the Centrist Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany as an organisationally autonomous unit. However, it broke with the Independents during the November Revolution in Germany in 1918 and organised the Spartacus League. It published its programme on December 14, 1918, and at its Inaugural Congress, which convened between December 30, 1918 and January 1, 1919, founded the Communist Party of Germany. p. 46

- ³³ The *Socialist Labour Party of America* was founded in 1876 at the unity congress held in Philadelphia as a result of the merger of the American sections of the First International and other socialist organisations. The overwhelming majority of the party were immigrants who had limited contacts with the American working class. Some of the party's leaders considered parliamentary activity to be the fundamental task of the party and underestimated the importance of giving leadership to the economic struggle of the masses; others lapsed into trade-unionism and anarchism. The ideological and tactical waverings of its leaders weakened the party and caused a number of groups to withdraw from it.

In the nineties the Left wing, headed by D. De Leon, assumed leadership of the party. However, this group, too, committed anarcho-syndicalist errors. At the time of the First World War (1914-18) the S.L.P. manifested a tendency towards internationalism. Under the impact of the October Revolution in Russia the more revolutionary section of the S.L.P. actively participated in organising the Communist Party of America. p. 47

- ³⁴ *The Socialist Party of America* was formed in July 1901; one of its organisers was Eugene Debs, a popular leader of the American labour movement. The party had a mixed social composition, comprising American workers, immigrant workers, as well as small farmers and petty bourgeoisie. The Centrist and Right-opportunist leadership of the party (Victor L. Berger and Morris Hillquit, among others) disclaimed the necessity for a dictatorship of the proletariat, rejected revolutionary methods of struggle and reduced the activities of the party primarily to participation in election campaigns. During the First World War three trends were manifest in the Socialist Party—the social-chauvinists, who supported the government's imperialist policy, the Centrists, whose protest against the imperialist war amounted to nothing more than mere talk, and the revolutionary minority, who adopted an internationalist stand and resolutely opposed the war.

The Left wing of the Socialist Party, headed by Charles Ruthenberg, William Foster, William Haywood and others, and backed by the proletarian membership, waged a struggle against the party's opportunist leadership and for independent political action by the proletariat, for organising industrial trade unions based on the principles of class struggle. In 1919 a split occurred in the Socialist Party. The breakaway Left wing took the initiative in forming the Communist Party of America, of which it was the core. p. 47

- ³⁵ *Tribunists*—members of the Social-Democratic Party of Holland whose spokesman was the newspaper *De Tribune*. The leaders of the Tribunists were David Wijnkoop, Herman Gorter, Anton Pannekoek, and Henriette Roland-Holst. The Tribunists were not a consistently revolutionary party, but they represented the Left wing of the Dutch labour movement, and during the First World War (1914-18) they adopted, in the main, an internationalist position.

In 1918 the Tribunists formed the Communist Party of Holland. p. 47

- ³⁶ *The Party of the Young or the Left*—the name given by Lenin to the Left wing of the Swedish Social-Democrats. During the First World War (1914-18) they adopted an internationalist stand and aligned themselves with the Zimmerwald Left. They formed the Left Social-Democratic Party of Sweden in May 1917. At the Party's congress in 1919 a resolution was adopted in favour of joining the Communist International. In 1921 the revolutionary wing of the party formed the Communist Party of Sweden. p. 47

- ³⁷ *Tesnyaki*—the revolutionary Social-Democratic Labour Party of Bulgaria, founded in 1903 after the split in the Social-Democratic Party. The founder and leader of the party was D. Blagoev; subsequent leaders, Blagoev's disciples, included among others G. Dimitrov and V. Kolarov. In the period 1914-18 the Tesnyaki opposed the im-

perialist war. In 1919 they joined the Communist International and formed the Communist Party of Bulgaria, later reorganised into the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists). p. 47

- ³⁸ *Avanti!* (Forward!)—a daily newspaper, founded in Rome in December 1896. During the First World War (1914-18) the paper took an inconsistent internationalist stand without breaking with the reformists. At present *Avanti!* is the central organ of the Italian Socialist Party. p. 47
- ³⁹ This refers to the appeal adopted at the Second International Conference of Zimmerwaldists held April 24-30, 1916, in Kienthal, entitled "To the Peoples Suffering Ruination and Death" p. 49
- ⁴⁰ *Die Jugendinternationale* (Youth International)—organ of the International Union of Socialist Youth Organisations associated with the Zimmerwald Left. It was published in Zurich from September 1915 to May 1918. p. 49
- ⁴¹ On April 7 (20), 1917, the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, by a majority of 21 votes against 14, adopted a resolution in support of the so-called Liberty Loan issued by the Provisional Government to finance the continuation of the imperialist war. The Bolshevik members of the Executive Committee opposed this loan and moved a resolution containing a detailed statement of their position. Several non-Bolshevik members of the Executive Committee voted with the Bolsheviks. p. 51
- ⁴² See Frederick Engels, Preface to *Internationales aus dem Volksstaat* (1871-1875). p. 52
- ⁴³ Quoted from Heine by Marx and Engels in their *German Ideology*. p. 54
- ⁴⁴ *The Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.)* was held in Petrograd on April 24-29, 1917. It was the first legally held conference of the Bolsheviks with the significance of a congress. The April Conference based its work on Lenin's April Theses, established the Party line on all principal questions of the revolution and directed the Party to focus on developing the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. p. 56
- ⁴⁵ *Soldatskaya Pravda* (Soldiers' Truth)—a Bolshevik daily, which first appeared in Petrograd on April 15 (28), 1917, as the organ of the Military Organisation of the Petrograd Committee, R.S.D.L.P.(B.); from May 19 (June 1), 1917 (No. 26), it became the organ of the Military Organisation of the Central Committee, R.S.D.L.P.(B.). The paper, extremely popular among soldiers, carried more than sixty articles and items written by Lenin, some of them specially for *Soldatskaya Pravda*. The paper was closed down by the Provisional Government following the events of July 1917; from July to October 1917, it was issued as *Rabochy i Soldat* (Worker and Soldier) and *Soldat* (Soldier). On October 27 (November 9), 1917, publication was resumed under its former name and continued until March 1918 when it was suspended by decision of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.). p. 56

⁴⁶ This refers to the first coalition Provisional Government which was formed on May 5 (18) following the April political crisis. Its composition was made public on May 6 (19), 1917.

The April crisis was caused by the Note which P. N. Milyukov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, had sent to the Allied governments on April 18 (May 1), 1917. In this Note the Provisional Government confirmed its readiness to honour all treaties concluded by the tsarist government and to continue the war until final victory. The imperialist policy of the Provisional Government evoked deep indignation among the broad masses of the working people. On April 21 (May 4) the Petrograd workers struck and staged a demonstration in which over 100,000 workers and soldiers participated demanding peace. Moscow, the Urals, the Ukraine, Kronstadt as well as other cities, towns and regions also became the scene of demonstrations and meetings of protest. Resolutions protesting Milyukov's Note were forwarded to the Petrograd Soviet from the Soviets of a number of cities.

The April demonstration produced the government crisis and forced the resignation of Foreign Minister Milyukov and War Minister Guchkov. On May 5 (18) the first coalition government was formed, consisting of ten capitalist ministers and leaders of the conciliatory parties (including, among others, A. F. Kerensky and V. M. Chernov from the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and I. G. Tsereteli and M. I. Skobelev from the Mensheviks). Siding with the bourgeoisie, the S. R.s and Mensheviks saved the bourgeois Provisional Government.

p. 57

⁴⁷ Lenin is referring to War Minister Kerensky's order, published on May 11 (24), 1917, containing a "Declaration of Soldier's Rights" which sanctioned the use of military force by a superior officer in cases of insubordination occurring in the field. This point was directed against soldiers and officers who refused to obey orders to attack. Simultaneously with the promulgation of this order Kerensky commenced the disbanding of regiments and prosecution of officers and soldiers guilty of "inciting to insubordination".

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Russel. See Williams, Russel.

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tunist wing of the Belgian Workers' Party and the Second International; became a social-chauvinist on the outbreak of the First World War and joined the bourgeois government of Belgium—48

1908 to April 1917; member of editorial boards of *Proletary* and *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the Party's Central Organ; adhered to internationalists during the First World War; took an inconsistent stand during the period of preparations for the

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